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BENJAMIN AND HIS BROTHERS.

YOUNG FOLKS' BIBLE LIBRARY

WILLIAM E. BARTON, A. M., D. D.

Editor-in-Chief



Boys and Girls of the Bible

By

Anna Louise Strong

VOLUME II

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THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE

BY

REV. FRANCIS E. CLARK, D. D.,

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In studying their characteristics, I have been impressed by two things about the young people of the Bible.

In the first place, they are real young people. In all the list I find no prodigy, no Thomas Chatterton writing abstruse poetry and hoaxing his elders with forged documents when barely in his teens; no boy who could write learned essays about the fourth dimension and instruct his instructors while his companions of the same age are not out of the grammar school.

Nor do I find any impossible prigs, whom one turns from with a secret sigh of thanksgiving that one knows so few like them.

You meet such prodigies and such prigs occasionally in real life, but the young people of the Bible do not represent the exceptional few, but the average, natural, healthy young person of everyday life. Call the roll of the Bible young people we can readily think of, and see if this is not true—Joseph, Samuel, Josiah, David, Timothy, the unnamed lad with the cakes and fishes which Christ multiplied, Ruth, and the Syrian maiden.

The beauty of the story which each of these names

recalls lies in its absolute naturalness. Samuel did not at first recognize the divine call any more than one of our own average American boys would have done. David was a good, red-blooded shepherd lad, loving his spear and his sling, and rejoicing in the strength of his sinews as he measured his strength with the lion and the bear.

The boy with the loaves and fishes was just like a hundred others who followed Christ that day, except that he carried the lunch his mother had provided for him, leading us to imagine that though he seems to have been an average boy, he had an unusually thoughtful mother, since his seems to have been the only cakes the disciples could discover.

Ruth was a constant, loving daughter, but no prodigy, and nothing could be more natural than the modest urgency of the little Syrian girl who wished her master to go to the prophet and be cured of his leprosy.

We approach the boyhood of our Lord with reverence, but as we study it, we find in its brief annals nothing that contradicts the nature of childhood except the one visit to the temple, where for a moment His Godlike wisdom seems to have shone forth, only to be hidden again for many long years while He worked with His father in the carpenter shop in little, circumscribed Nazareth. It is only in the discredited tales of the Apocrypha that our Lord performs miracles, making the images of the clay birds to fly, and striking His little companions dead to show His almighty power.

But, secondly, while Bible young people are real

young people; natural, healthy, wholesome young people, they show that they have in them the making of earnest, conscientious men and women.

I have little sympathy with mollicoddles, but I have still less with those religious teachers who fear that youthful devotion and piety will develop mollicoddles. That is the last danger which the youth of this generation need fear, yet they are constantly being warned against it by some teachers and preachers. Only recently I heard an eminent Sunday-School orator exclaim before a great audience of Sunday-School teachers and scholars: "I like the bad boy, the mischievous boy, the boy that is always getting into trouble. There is more to him than to the mollicoddle, and he ought to have most of our attention."

This sentiment brought down the galleries, as it was evidently meant to do, with loud applause, and was doubtless very comforting to any mischievous, unruly boys who might have been in the audience. Few remarks could be more harmful, for it spreads the idea that conscientious good behaviour is not to be expected of young people; that if they are smart, they will be more or less bad or at least unruly and unmannerly.

It is of a piece with the exploded idea that a young man can sow wild oats and reap good wheat—an impossible harvest. It is the prevalence of this idea that accounts for many of the unpleasant characteristics of Young America, that makes some of our Sunday Schools bedlams of disorder, and that leads our high school teachers to say that the hardest

children to manage are not the Jewish children, fresh from Poland, or the young Hungarians and Bohemians, but the boys and girls from our "best" American families.

Men who generalize in this foolish, haphazard manner about bad boys and good would doubtless have preferred Absalom to Solomon, Cain to Abel, Judah to Joseph. Most certainly they would laud Esau at the expense of Jacob, yet God was able to make a better man of the quiet, though crafty, Jacob than of the bold and reckless Esau. Such men would surely pronounce Joseph a mollycoddle, and very likely would put Samuel and Josiah in the same class.

In the story of its young people, as in all its teachings, the Bible is true to the facts of human nature. Good boys, as a rule, make good men. Bad boys make bad men. So far as I recall, Jacob is the only Bible character, of whose youth we know anything, whose bad young manhood was transformed into a noble and honored old age. In about the same proportion do bad boys make good men today.

Some good young men of the Bible, like David and Solomon, degenerated in their riper years, but these men no one could call mollycoddles in their youth. Alas, it is the same in the real life of today. Strong passions and lusts, held in restraint by the more tender conscience of early life, sometimes break the barriers of Godliness or even decent living in middle life, as the dreadful lapses from virtue, which occasionally shock the church and the nation, prove.

All these brief biographies of youth, with which the Bible abounds, do but prove the unerring insight

of its writers. They knew human nature in youth and age. They pictured no impossible, saintly young people, nor did they fall into the other error of forgetting to describe the conscientious, earnest, obedient younger days of the men who developed into the greatest and worthiest of our race, men whose names are fit to be inscribed in the Bible of the human race, the Book of all times and for all time.

To learn the real facts of human nature, uncolored and undistorted, the springs of human action, the beginnings of greatness and power, we cannot do better than to study the young people of the Bible.

Francis E. Clark

BOSTON, MASS.

BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE BIBLE

THE FIRST STORY

THE FIRST CHILDREN



ONCE upon a time, a long, long time ago, things were very different in the world from those we now see. You and I were not here, and many other things were not as they are in our day.

Did you ever stop to think what there was in the world long before you and all the other little boys and girls you know were here? There are a great many little boys and girls in the world now, you know. Some of them in the next house, and some of them in the next block, and some of them in the town you live in, and some of them clear around the world—white children, and black children, and Chinese children, and all kinds of children.

But just a little while ago, you were not here and the other little children were not here either. There

were only the fathers and mothers. And before that, even the fathers and mothers were not born yet. And still more years ago, there were no towns or cities, but just a few people living in the woods and fields. So ever and ever so far back, and many years ago, there must have been the very first baby.

Do you not wonder what that first baby looked like, and what color his hair was? Do you suppose he was a pretty baby? And where did he live? Nobody knows about any of these things, because it was so long ago. There is just one thing that people have remembered through all the years about that first baby. He grew up to be a bad man.

Is not that a dreadful thing to have remembered for so many years? How would you like it, when you are dead, to have only one thing known about you—that you had been bad? But that is the kind of thing that lasts longest. It will last long after the color of your hair is gone, and long after nobody knows where you lived.

This is a story about that first baby. It is a story that mothers told their children for hundreds and hundreds of years, before there was any one who knew how to write it. Then it was written down and kept in a book we call the Bible.

Long ago, before there were any people in the world, there must have been God, before everything else, because He made the world and everything in it. He made the light, and the sun, and the moon, and the green grass, and the big ocean, and all the trees and flowers. Then He made the animals; they came last. You see, animals cannot live on the earth till there are

plants and vegetables for them to eat, so they could not come first.

Last of all, God made people, the very first people there ever were. He made the first man and the first woman. The first man was called Adam, and the first woman Eve.

When Adam and Eve were made, they lived in a beautiful garden called Eden. There were lovely rivers in it, and tall, green trees, and all sorts of animals. Everything they wanted to eat grew of itself, and they did not have to work at all to get everything they needed.

But there was one tree in the garden of which they could not eat, because God told them not to. God said that if they ate of the fruit on that tree they would surely be punished.

One day, when Eve was walking in the garden, she saw a snake come gliding over the grass. And the snake came up to her and said: "What a beautiful garden!"

Eve was very much pleased, and she began to talk to the snake about the garden and the lovely fruits that she had to eat. But when she came to one of the trees, she had to keep still about it, for she had never tasted its fruit.

Then the snake said to her: "Did God tell you not to eat from one of the trees in the garden?"

And Eve answered: "God has given us many trees to eat from, and they are all for us, but there is one tree in the midst of the garden that we must not touch."

But the snake said: "God knows that if you eat of

that tree your eyes will be opened, and you shall be like God himself, knowing good and evil."

So the snake tempted Eve to take the fruit, and Eve took it, and ate it, and gave some to Adam.

Did you ever feel something small and bad, like a little snake, come sliding into your heart and telling you to do things when your mother told you not to? Well, that's just the same thing. And if you don't put the horrid thing right out, what happens? You do something naughty and get punished, do you not?

That is just what happened to Adam and Eve. God put them out of the lovely garden. And nobody knows where that garden is now, and nobody can ever find it again.

So Adam and Eve went out into the bare, hard world to work for their living. They had to dig in the ground and sow wheat in order to have enough to eat, and they had to kill wild animals and take the skins to keep themselves warm.

But there was one thing God sent them that helped make them happy. Can you guess what it was? Why, of course! The first baby!

They gave the name of Cain to the first baby. Eve was very proud of him. She knew that some day he would grow to be a man, and she wanted him to be a good man.

Do you know, that is the way all mothers think about their boys and girls. They watch them grow up and they love them, and they want so very much to have them be great and good men and women. Sometimes the boys and girls turn out the way their mothers wish, and sometimes they hurt her very much

and make her unhappy all her life because of the way they behave.

How did Cain grow up? You have already heard that he became a bad man. Nobody knows just when



MOTHER AND BABY.

he began to be bad, but it must have been by little deeds that did not seem to count. By and by the things he did grew worse and worse, until at last—you will find out later what a terrible thing he did.

Adam and Eve had two little boys. The second was named Abel. He was Cain's little brother and was a good boy.

Most boys who have no other children to play with would be glad to have a little brother, would they not? But Cain hated his brother Abel. He wanted to be the only boy in the family so that his father and mother would never love anyone else as well as they loved him.

When Abel grew older Cain hated him more and more. At last he said to himself: "I wish my brother Abel was dead." And when a boy says a thing like that, you never know where it will stop.

Cain and Abel did different kinds of work. Cain planted the vegetables and sowed the grain. But Abel took care of the sheep and cows and drove them to good pasture lands where they could find plenty of grass.

When Cain and Abel grew up, their father and mother taught them to pray to God. In those days men did not pray to God in the way that we do. We know now that we are all God's children and that He loves every one of us. We know that even a little boy or girl can talk to God, and that God will hear him. And we know that God speaks to us, deep down in our hearts, and tells us the right things to do, because He loves us.

But in those days, long, long ago, people did not know that God loved them. They were afraid of Him, and tried to make Him be good to them by giving Him things. They used to build great, high altars of stone, and bring sheep and precious gifts to

the altars to burn before God. They thought that this would make God kind to them.

So when Cain and Abel were taught to pray to God, they were not taught to pray as you are. They were taught to build high altars, and to kill sheep on them, and burn their gifts in just the way the people thought pleased God best. They called this gift a sacrifice.

One day Cain went out to make a sacrifice. He built a high stone altar, and he brought the grain and vegetables that he had raised and burned them before God. But his heart was full of hate to his brother Abel; he was not thinking about loving God and loving his brother.

Perhaps the thing Cain really wanted from God was that God should help him against his brother Abel. Nobody knows just what he wanted. We only know one thing. God was not pleased with Cain's sacrifice.

But God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice. For Abel went out at the same time to pray to God. He built a high altar of stone, and he brought the young lambs of his flock and killed them, and burned them before God.

Cain knew that God was not pleased with his gifts. He felt it in his heart. You know, of course, that you can tell when God is pleased with you. You can feel it down deep in your heart, can you not? Well, Cain knew that God was not pleased.

But instead of trying to please God, Cain grew very angry. When he looked at his brother Abel, he was more angry still. For Abel had a happy face,

because he had given his best lambs to God. He loved God, and he knew that God was pleased with his love.

It made Cain angry to see Abel so happy. A very ugly and hateful look came over his face, and he said: "Why should my brother be happy when I am not happy? Why is God pleased with him and not with me?"

God answered Cain, and said: "Why are you angry, Cain, and why have you such an ugly, hateful look? If you do well, do you not know that I will be pleased with you, and that your face will shine with happiness just as Abel's does, because there will be happiness in your heart? But if you do not do well, if you keep your heart full of bad thoughts, you will keep on getting worse and worse till you do something dreadful. So now, send away your wicked thoughts. I cannot be pleased with you when you are angry with your brother."

When Cain knew that God would not be pleased with him, he grew more angry still. That was a very foolish thing, was it not? But Cain said to himself: "I will hate my brother Abel. Whatever God says, I will. I hate him all the more for being so good and making God pleased with him."

So Cain kept all his hate in his heart and it grew and grew. One day they were out in the field together and Cain was thinking of how he hated his brother, and all of a sudden a dreadful thing happened.

Cain stood up and said to Abel: "I hate you. God is pleased with you and not with me. I hate you; I hate you." And Cain took up a heavy stone and be-

fore Abel could get away, he hit him with it on the head.

Abel fell to the ground and did not move at all, and when Cain came to look at him, what had happened? Abel was dead. Cain had killed his own brother.

Then Cain was afraid. But he said to himself: "I don't care. I have killed Abel and I am glad of it." So he went on working.

God spoke to Cain and said: "Where is Abel, your brother?"

And that made Cain very much afraid. He knew that he had done a wicked thing and he was afraid of the voice of God. But he answered: "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? Do I have to look out for him all the time? I do not know where he is."

Then God answered: "What is this thing that you have done? The voice of your brother's blood calls to me from the ground. The beautiful earth, made to give food and life to men and to be a blessing, you have stained with blood. You have made the whole world ugly with murder."

Of course that is what a bad deed always does. It makes the whole world bad and ugly for you. Things can never be quite the same as before.

And God said still more to Cain: "The earth which you have stained with blood shall hate you forever." He said: "When you dig and plant, you shall not find food. The grain and the vegetables shall not grow for you. You shall go forth and wander over the earth forever till you die."

Then Cain answered: "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, God has driven me away

from everything in life. I cannot dig and plant and raise grain any longer. I shall never hear God's voice speak to me again, because of what I have done. I must hide from everything on the earth and be a

wanderer forever. And it will happen that whoever finds me will kill me, for the whole world will hate me."

But God answered: "No one shall ever be allowed to hurt you. But you must go away from Me and from the place where I rule, and wander over the earth."

So Cain left God and went away from his father and mother to a far country. And there he lived for many years, in loneliness and unhappiness, because of the terrible sin he had done, and because he had hated his brother



CAIN SENT AWAY.

Abel, and kept on hating him till he killed him.

No one ever knows, when he begins hating another person, just where he will stop. Hate goes on and on and gets worse and worse, and makes you do things at last that you would never have done at first.

But God sent Adam and Eve another boy, in place

of the two they had lost. They called his name Seth. Seth grew to be an old man, and did for his father and mother all the things that Abel could not do because he was dead, and that Cain could not do because his evil deed had sent him away from his family.

QUESTIONS

Who made the world and everything in it?

Who were Adam and Eve?

What was the name of the first baby?

How do you suppose a mother feels when her baby grows up the way Cain did?

Who was the second boy?

What dreadful thing did Cain do to his brother?

Why was God pleased with Abel and not with Cain?

How does anyone know when God is pleased?

What did God do to Cain to punish him?



THE SECOND STORY

THE HOME THAT WANTED A BOY



IN OLDEN times there lived a great man whose name was Abraham. He was a very good man, too. He was so good that he left his home and went into a strange land so that he could worship the true God. All the people in his own country worshiped idols, and they would not allow Abraham to worship the true God as he earnestly desired.

Abraham prayed to God about it, and at last God answered him. Did you know that God sometimes speaks to us and tells us to do things? When we want very much to do what is right and pray about it, then we can hear a voice deep down in our hearts that says: "Do this." And that is God speaking to us.

So God said to Abraham: "Leave your home and go to another land, where you will not have to worship idols. For you shall be the father of a great nation, and your children's children shall worship me, and I will be their God."

And Abraham went far away to the west till he came to the land of Canaan, to start the great nation of people who were going to worship the true God.

For years and years Abraham lived in the land of Canaan. At last he grew to be a very old man, and Sarah, his wife, was a very old woman. All this time they had not had any children.

Then Abraham began to be afraid that God had forgotten His promise. So he prayed to God, and said: "I left my home to come to the land of Canaan and start a great nation, and now I am old and Sarah is old, and we have no children. Before long we shall die, and then what will become of the great nation that was going to worship the true God?"

God answered: "In less than a year you shall have a son."

Abraham went and told Sarah, his wife, that God had promised them a son.

But Sarah laughed, and said: "I am too old to have a son. We are both of us old, and have been married many years, and all this time we have had no children. I do not believe that we shall ever have a son."

But Abraham believed what God had said to him.

And, sure enough, in less than a year a son was born to Sarah and Abraham. They called him Isaac. Both Abraham and Sarah were very happy because they had a son, for now they believed that the great nation which Abraham was going to start might come.

The people in the land of Canaan where Abraham lived worshiped idols. They were very much afraid of these idols. In order to keep the idols from hurting them they used to kill sheep and other kinds of animals and burn them on the altars of the idols. And sometimes, when they were very much afraid of what the idol might do to them, and wanted to get the idol

to take care of them, they used to kill children on the altar. They even killed their own children. They thought this would please their gods.

Abraham used to see these people offering their own children to their heathen gods. He thought a great deal about it and said to himself: "I don't see how any father could ever kill his own boy, even to please his gods."

Then he began to think some more. He said: "These poor people worship only heathen gods, and still they care for them so much that sometimes they give their own children to them. I worship the true God, but I wonder how much I would really do for Him. I wonder if I would do as much as they do." And Abraham did not know.

So one day, when Abraham was praying, God said to him: "Abraham."

And Abraham answered: "I am here."

Then God said: "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a sacrifice on one of the mountains which I will show thee."

How do you suppose Abraham felt when he heard God tell him to do that? Perhaps he thought: "This is my only boy, and I am an old man now. All my whole life I have wanted to be the father of many people who should love the true God, and now when I have a son God takes him away from me for a sacrifice."

I do not suppose that Abraham slept that night. He lay awake wondering what he should do. Even after he knew that he was going to obey the voice of God,

and give up his only son, even then he did not sleep. It seemed such a very dreadful thing.

Then Abraham arose early in the morning, and saddled his ass. He took two young men with him,



ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

and Isaac his son, and he cut wood for a sacrifice and went to the place God had told him of. It was the first time Isaac had ever been on a long journey with

his father. He was having a beautiful time, riding on the ass, or running alongside it, and asking his father all kinds of questions.

All the time it seemed harder and harder to Abraham to do what God asked him to. Isaac was so young and so trusting; he was such a beautiful boy. And he was Abraham's only son.

So for three whole days they went over the hills and across the low, dusty, desert country, where the land was dry and hard because the rain seldom came. And for three nights they camped out under the bright stars. And Isaac crept up close to his father to keep warm and said, "Father."

And Abraham asked him: "Well, Isaac?"

And Isaac said: "Where are we going and what are we going to do?"

It seemed harder and harder to tell Isaac what was going to happen. So Abraham said: "We are going up into the mountains to make a sacrifice to God." And Isaac was very glad because he was old enough to go with his father to make the sacrifice.

All those three days and three nights Abraham asked himself: "Does God really mean to take my son Isaac from me?" And all the time it seemed to him that God really did intend to do so, and that he would have to go back to Sarah without the boy they loved so much.

After three days they came to the mountain, and Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place far off. Then Abraham said to the two young men, who were his servants: "Stay here with the ass, and Isaac and I will go over to the mountain, and we will make

our sacrifice and pray to God, and then come back to you."

So Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice, and gave it to Isaac to carry, and he took in his own hands the fire and the knife, and they went both of them together.

Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said: "My father," and Abraham said: "I am here, my son."

And Isaac said: "Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb we are going to sacrifice?" For even Isaac knew that they always had animals to sacrifice when people went to pray to God. That was the way they always did in those days.

Then Abraham could hardly keep from crying, but he did not want to frighten Isaac until the time came. So he answered: "God will see about the lamb for the sacrifice, my son."

So they climbed on up the mountain and at last they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar of large stones and put the wood all in order on the altar to make the fire. Then Abraham stood up and looked at Isaac. And Isaac felt afraid.

Then Isaac said: "But where is the lamb, my father? You told me that God would see to the lamb. And now everything is ready."

Abraham took Isaac and bound him with ropes and laid him on the altar on the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to kill his son Isaac. Isaac lay quite still on the altar, for he was tied fast with ropes.

But just as Abraham raised the knife over Isaac,

God spoke to him, and said: "Abraham, Abraham."

Abraham dropped his hand with the knife in it, and answered: "Here am I."

And God said: "Do not lift your hand against Isaac your son, and do not hurt him in any way. For now I know that you will obey God, and give everything to Him, even the life of your own son."

Just then Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw an animal tangled by its horns in the bushes, and he rose and went quickly and took the animal, and laid it on the wood and killed it and burnt it, instead of his son, for an offering to God.

Then God spoke to Abraham and said: "Because you have done this thing, and have not kept back from me your son, your only son, and because you have been faithful and obeyed me in everything, I will give you a great blessing. Look up at the stars and see how many there are, and look at the shore of the sea, and see how many grains of sand there are. So many shall be the people of the nation that shall call you their father. They shall be the children and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of Isaac, the son you were willing to give me."

And God promised Abraham something still greater, for He said: "The nation which shall call you father shall be great, and it shall be a good nation also, and shall do great good upon the earth, and bring a great blessing to all people." All this happened just as God said, for the nation which God gave to Abraham was the nation in which Jesus our Saviour was born thousands of years afterwards.

So Abraham and Isaac went back home to Sarah,

and Isaac grew to be a man and became very great and famous. He lived long and he had two boys. You will hear about those boys in another story.

QUESTIONS

Why did Abraham leave his home?

Where was his home?

How did people then worship God?

What God did Abraham worship?

What did God promise Abraham?

Did Abraham believe God? Did Sarah believe God?

What did the people in those days do when they wanted to please God?

Is that what God wants us to do?

What do you suppose made Abraham think that God wanted him to kill his own son?

Does God ever want us to hurt or kill anything?

What did Abraham do to show how much he loved God?

What promise did God give Abraham? How did it come true?



THE THIRD STORY

A SELFISH NEPHEW



LET us remember again the story about Abraham, and what a great, good man he was, and how he left his own country and his own family to go away to a place where he could worship God. This story to-day is to be about Abraham's nephew.

God spoke to Abraham and said: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation and bless thee and make thy name great; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

So Abraham went, as God had told him to, but he did not go alone. His nephew Lot went with him.

Perhaps Lot knew of the blessing that God had promised to Abraham, and wanted to have a part of it. Or perhaps Lot wanted to worship the true God instead of idols. Or perhaps he loved his uncle Abraham and did not want him to go alone. At any rate Lot went with Abraham.

They went west and west and west till they came

to the land of Canaan. There they found a well, and made a camp. The land was not very good and the people had to be moving around all the time to get enough food for their sheep and cattle. So they all lived in tents. It was like camping out all the year.

One year there came a time when there was hardly any rain at all, and nothing grew. This was what is called a famine. It means that there is not enough to eat. So Abraham said: "Let us go down to the great, rich country of Egypt for food."

By and by you will hear a story of some other men who went down to Egypt, and of a boy who was sold as a slave and sent to Egypt, so you will want to remember Egypt, the great, green, beautiful land where plenty of grain and vegetables grew.

Abraham and Lot went down to Egypt. But when the famine was over they came back to the land of Canaan again. They had chosen Canaan for their home, and even if it was not as good a country as Egypt, they wanted to come home again. In Canaan they could be free men. They could wander from place to place and do as they wished. But in Egypt there was a great king to rule over the people.

Abraham and Lot grew richer and richer. They had many sheep and many cows, and a great number of tents and servants. They had been rich when they went down to Egypt, and they were still richer when they came back. Some of the sheep and cows and servants were Lot's and some were Abraham's.

But the land they came to was not a rich land. There was not very much grass in any one place. Abraham and Lot had a great many sheep and cows,

and all the sheep and cows wanted grass. So what do you suppose happened?

What happens to you and the boys and girls you know when there is not enough to go around, and you all want some? You know, do you not? There is pretty sure to be a quarrel. Well, that was what happened with Abraham and Lot.

But Abraham was a great, good man. Surely he would not quarrel. No, Abraham did the very best he could. This was the way it happened:

Lot had some servants who took care of his sheep, and Abraham had some other servants who took care of his sheep. The servants had to hunt for good grass and take the sheep where they could eat it.

Sometimes one of Lot's men would find a place of good grass and would go away to get his sheep. When he came back, Abraham's men would be there already and all his time had been wasted. His sheep would go hungry.

Then Lot would say to him: "Why are my sheep so lean? You are not taking good care of them."

The servant would be very angry, and the next time he saw one of Abraham's servants he would say angry, unkind words to him. And Abraham's servants talked back.

After that, when Lot's men found Abraham's sheep in a place of good grass, they drove them out. This made Abraham's men angry.

"This is our place," they said. Then they began to fight.

Abraham was a good man and he did not want to fight. It made him very sorry to see that Lot and

he could not live together without having the servants always fighting. But there was not enough grass for all. So after a while Abraham called Lot and spoke to him.

"Lot," he said, "do not let there be any more fighting between us, between our servants and my servants. You are my own nephew, and I am your uncle. It is a dreadful thing to have quarreling in a family. Let us divide the land."

Then Lot answered, "How shall we divide the land, if we stay together? There is not enough grass here for both of us."

"We shall have to separate," said Abraham. "The land is large, and there will be grass enough if we go far enough apart."

"How shall we decide where to go?" asked Lot. "Part of the land is good land, and part of it is very bad. Tell me what would be fair."

Lot thought that Abraham would take a great deal of time and look over all the country and decide what would be fair to both of them. Abraham had just as good a right to the best land as Lot had. But Abraham was not a selfish man. He was not always wondering whether he could get his rights.

"Is not the whole land before us?" he said. "Choose for yourself where you will go. If you take the left hand, I will take the right; and if you take the right hand, I will take the left. You may choose whichever part you wish, and I will take the rest. But do not let there be any quarreling between us."

So Lot looked off to the east and saw a beautiful plain. The river Jordan ran through it and there

were spots of very good grass and farming land. There was plenty of water everywhere in this plain. There were cities there, too, but they were very wicked cities, two of the wickedest cities there ever were. The people in those cities did not love God, but they did all kinds of terrible things.

Then Lot turned around and looked to the west. There he saw the hill country. There was not much



THE LAND LOT CHOSE.

grass in the hills, for the grass could only grow where there was water, and the rivers were all down in the plain to the east. In the hills there were a few little wells with grass growing around them, but most of the land was bare.

But there were no wicked people in the hills. The people who lived there were free to love God as they



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LOT'S CHOICE.

chose. They did not have to live with wicked neighbors. Which place do you think you would choose, the hills or the plain?

Lot looked at the long, rich plain with the river. He thought how much grass there was, and how rich it would make him. He thought of the wicked cities he would have to live near, but he did not care much about them. All he cared about was the money. So he said: "I will take the plain to the east, near the river."

So Lot and Abraham separated. Lot took all the rich, level land near the river, and Abraham took what was left. For Lot was selfish, but Abraham was unselfish. When Lot had gone and Abraham was left alone in the hills, where there is not much grass, but where the stars shine down brightly and the sky seems very near, God spoke to Abraham.

"Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy children forever. And I will make thy children as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then he may tell the number of thy children. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it."

So Abraham lived in the hills where he was free to love God as he chose. And God gave him all these wonderful promises, that he should be the father of a great people.

Because Abraham was unselfish and did not take the land that looked the best, he got some land that

was really much better for him. It was not so green or so full of grain and vegetables, but Abraham could live in the fresh air, and his children grew up in the fresh air. They grew strong and good and brave.



SODOM, THE CITY OF LOT.

But do you know what happened to Lot? He lived in the wicked city and he married a wife of the wicked people. He had four daughters. They had to grow up in a wicked town instead of in the lovely fresh air of the hills. And when they grew up, two

of them married some of the men of the wicked city and grew just as wicked as the other people.

So years and years afterwards, when God sent a storm to destroy the wicked city, Lot's married daughters and all the people in the city were killed, and only Lot and the other two girls of his family were saved. They lost all the sheep and cows and the riches that Lot had gone to the plain to get. But that will have to be told in another story.

QUESTIONS

Who went with Abraham when he left home?

Why do you suppose Lot went along?

How did Abraham and Lot live? Did they have houses like ours?

What is a famine?

Where did Abraham and Lot go when there was a famine?

What happened to Abraham and Lot when they began to get rich?

Who started the quarrel?

Who stopped the quarrel?

What did Abraham do that showed how unselfish and good he was?

What did Lot do that showed how selfish he was?

What kind of a place did Lot choose to live in?

What kind of a place did Abraham live in?

What happened to Lot?

THE FOURTH STORY

A FAMILY THAT HAD TO MOVE



OME Bible stories are pleasant, and others are not so.

This is the story of what happened to Lot and his family after Lot made such a selfish choice and went to live in the rich and wicked cities. You remember how it was that Lot and

his uncle Abraham could not live together, because their servants were always quarreling over the good grass places. And you remember how Abraham was a good man who did not want to quarrel and how he told Lot to take his choice of all the land, and he would take what was left.

Well, Lot took the fine, green, beautiful land down by the river Jordan. He raised his tents, and moved them down the hills to the river, and camped near the wicked city Sodom. At first he did not live in the city itself, because he knew it was a very wicked city. He lived outside in his tents, and remembered what Abraham had told him about God. He prayed to the true God and not to the idols in Sodom.

But the people of Sodom were very rich. They began to buy sheep and cows from Lot, and sometimes he would buy from them.

After a while Lot met a beautiful woman who lived in Sodom. He wanted to marry her. But her people said: "You do not live in Sodom. You think you are better than we are. We cannot give our daughter to a stranger."

So Lot moved closer and closer to the city, and after a while he moved straight into the city and built himself a house. And there he lived with all the rest of the wicked people.

Perhaps you think that Lot would try to do them good and make them be better. But do you remember how selfish Lot began to be with Abraham? That was just the beginning. More and more Lot grew selfish. That is always the way if you do not watch yourself and take very good care to stop it at the very beginning.

So Lot did not care whether the people of Sodom were wicked or not. He only cared about the money he could make in Sodom. He grew richer and richer, and the richer he grew, the more he was afraid to make the people angry by telling them how wicked they were. After a while he began to do some of the wicked things himself, just because everyone else did them.

But still Lot never forgot some of the things his uncle Abraham had taught him about God. So he never became really very bad, like the rest of the people of Sodom.

After many years a great war broke out in the land. The king of Sodom had been such a wicked king, and the kings of all the other cities had been such wicked kings, that they could not keep from fighting. The

other kings beat the people of Sodom, and carried Lot away with them.

When Abraham heard this he was very angry. His nephew had been selfish, but he still loved him. So he got together his servants and his friends and went after the kings who had carried Lot away. He killed the kings and he brought back all the goods and he brought back Lot.

Perhaps you think that after this Lot saw how foolish it was to live in a wicked city where the people were always going to war. No, he still stayed there. He married the beautiful woman of Sodom whom he loved, and he lived happily with her for a number of years.

After a while Lot and his wife had a little baby girl. And Lot was very happy. Then he had another baby girl, and then another, till after a while there were four girls in Lot's family, and not any boys. And still Lot lived in the wicked city of Sodom.

Sometimes, you know, when fathers and mothers live in a bad, wicked city, they move away, so that the boys and girls can have a good place to grow up in. But Lot did not move. He kept right on living in Sodom, and his girls grew older and older and older, and the only boys and girls they had to play with were the boys and girls of Sodom who did not love God, and who were always naughty.

After many years two of Lot's girls were old enough to be married. And what do you suppose Lot did? Sometime in another story you will hear how Abraham did not want his boy to marry any of the wicked people who lived in the land, but sent far

away for a wife for him. But Lot did not care about being good the way Abraham cared.

So one of the men of Sodom came to Lot and said: "Your oldest daughter is very beautiful. Let me have her for my wife." Lot gave his oldest daughter to the man of Sodom, and they were married and settled down in the wicked city.

Then another of the men of Sodom came to Lot and said: "You have another beautiful daughter, and I love her very much. Give her to me for my wife." So two of Lot's daughters married the wicked men of Sodom. But the other two daughters were not old enough to be married yet.

All the time the city of Sodom grew still more wicked. The people there did not love God at all, and they did not love anybody else but themselves. When poor people and strangers came into the city from the hills outside, the people of Sodom never gave them anything to eat, or any place to sleep, but they beat them with sticks and knocked them around, and sometimes they killed them. Lot was the only man in the whole city of Sodom who was kind to poor people and strangers.

So the city grew worse and worse till God made up his mind to burn it. He said: "I will send fire and stones out of the sky on the city of Sodom and on all the wicked cities around it, till all the wicked people are killed."

Abraham knew what God was going to do. Abraham felt very sorry for the poor people of Sodom. He did not know how wicked they were. So he said to God: "Suppose there should be fifty good men in

the city. It would be a dreadful thing for the fifty good men to be killed."

God answered: "If there are fifty good men in the city, I will save the whole city because of the fifty good men."

Then Abraham thought, and he was afraid that perhaps there were not so many as fifty. So he said: "Suppose there were only forty-five?" And God said: "If there are forty-five good men in the whole city, I will not burn up the city."

Abraham was more and more frightened, for he thought: "Perhaps there will be almost forty-five and not quite. How dreadful it would be if a whole city should be burnt up because there were only forty." So he said to God: "What would you do if there were only forty?" And God answered: "If there are forty good men in Sodom, I will not burn up the city."

Then Abraham said: "Do not be angry with me for asking it, but I have a nephew, Lot, who lives in Sodom. He prays to God and is kind to strangers. I do not want him to be burned up. If there are thirty good men in Sodom, will you burn it?" And God said: "If there are thirty good men in Sodom I will not burn it."

Would you not think that Abraham would have stopped asking then? But he thought how very wicked the city was and he was so afraid that Lot would be burned that he said: "Suppose there should be only twenty?" God answered: "If there are twenty good men in Sodom, I will not burn the city."

Abraham said once more: "Let me ask again, just

this one time, for it is dreadful to burn a city. If there are ten good men in Sodom, will you burn it?"

God said: "If there are ten good men in Sodom, I will not burn it."

Then Abraham stopped asking for he thought surely there must be ten good men in Sodom.

What do you think about it? Are there ten good men in your town? Of course there are; there are many good men in your town. Every town must have ten good men, do you not think so? But God sent some angels to look at the town of Sodom and see what they could find.

They looked up one street and they looked up the next, and they looked in all the streets and in all the alleys, and they looked in all the houses, and they looked all over the town, and what do you suppose they found? There was only one man who was kind to poor people and to strangers; there was only one man in the whole town of Sodom who loved God, and that was Lot.

So the angels said to Lot: "God is going to burn the whole city of Sodom, for it is a very wicked city. But you are a good man, so get up quickly and take your wife and your daughters and everyone you love and go to the hills, for all the people of the city will be burned."

Then Lot said: "But what will become of my house, and all my riches?"

The angels answered: "They will be burned, because they are in this wicked city of Sodom. But you and your wife and your daughters have time to save your own lives. Get up and go very quickly,

and do not turn around to come back, for the fire will come very soon."

So Lot sent to the men who had married his daughters and said to them: "God has told me that the city is going to be burned. Bring my daughters whom you have married and come quickly out of the city."

The two men laughed at Lot's words. They said: "The city of Sodom is an old and a beautiful city. Nobody can burn it."

Then the angels said to Lot: "Do not wait for them any longer for the fire is coming quickly." So Lot arose and took his wife and the two daughters who were not married, and went out of the city to the hills. Almost before he went the fire began to come down.

Lot and his wife and his daughters ran as fast as they could up the hills away from the city. And behind them the fire and hot stones were falling faster and faster and faster. Then Lot's wife said: "I must go a little way back to see what has become of the city." But Lot answered: "Do not dare to go back or to stop for a moment. We will all be burned if we wait."

Lot's wife said: "All the money we have and all the riches we have are in that city. I am going to look around and see what is happening to them."

Lot took hold of her and tried to pull her along up the hill with him, but she stopped and turned around to look at the city. All the beautiful houses were full of fire and smoke, and hot stones and fire were coming down out of the sky. The city was smoking like a big furnace.

Lot's wife looked and looked and kept on looking. She did not go on up the hill with Lot, for she loved the wicked city so much that she could not leave it behind. So she looked and waited till the hot, poisoned



LOT'S WIFE.

air from the city caught up with her and she died, and turned into a heap of salt.

But Lot and his two daughters went up the hill till they came to a little town named Zoar. They stayed there for a little while, and then they went on up the hills and lived in the mountains.

The next morning Abraham went out to see what had happened to Sodom. For he thought: "Surely there must have been ten good men there. I am sure that God did not burn it all up." He came to the edge of the hill and looked over, and he saw all the land near the river, the beautiful place that Lot had chosen because it was the best and greenest land. But now it was all ashes and smoking just like a furnace. That is what happened to the wicked city of Sodom where there were not even ten good men.

QUESTIONS

When Lot left Abraham where did he go?

What made him move to the wicked city of Sodom?

What always happens if you begin to be selfish, unless you watch very carefully?

How many children did Lot have?

Did Lot take care to have his daughters grow up to be good girls?

What did God decide to do to the wicked city of Sodom?

What did Abraham ask God and what did God answer?

What happened to Lot?

What happened to Lot's daughters? Were all of them burned?

What happened to Lot's wife?

What did Abraham see when he looked out the next morning?

THE FIFTH STORY

THE BOY WHO BECAME A HUNTER



It will interest you to hear a story about a boy who was sent away from his home, and who wandered a long time in the desert country, where there was no green grass and nothing to eat and no water to drink, until he almost died. The boy was

Abraham's own son, Ishmael.

You remember the story about Abraham and Isaac. You remember that God promised Abraham that he should be the father of a very great people. God told Abraham that he and Sarah should have a son, and that this son should be the beginning of a great people.

Well, years and years went by and Abraham and Sarah had no son. You remember all about that, do you not? Abraham grew very sad, and Sarah grew very sad, for they were both growing old and feared they might not have any children.

At last Sarah said to Abraham. "We are both of us growing old and we have no children and after a while we shall die. But I have a beautiful servant maid named Hagar. Take her for your second wife and perhaps she will have a son instead of me."

That sounds very strange does it not? But years ago people did not know any better. They thought it was all right for a man to have two wives. Sometimes they had three or four and sometimes even more than that.

There are some places in the world now where men have two or three wives. They are heathen people, who do not know God or do not love Him. But the people who love God and love Jesus know better than to live in that way.

So Abraham took Hagar, Sarah's beautiful servant girl, for his other wife.

Hagar was a good servant girl. She always did what Sarah told her to do, and she loved Sarah. But as soon as she had married Abraham, she began to hate Sarah. She said: "I am just as good as Sarah now; why should I do what Sarah tells me?"

So Sarah began to feel very sad. She did not know that Hagar would act that way. Sarah said to Abraham: "My servant maid hates me now, and says I am not as good as she is, because I let her be your wife."

Abraham said: "Whether she is my wife or not, she is still your servant maid. She must do what you tell her to do."

So Sarah was very mean to poor Hagar. She treated her very badly, and made her do all the hard work. She said such mean things to her that after a while Hagar ran away. She went far away from the tents where Abraham and Sarah lived and she went out into the great desert where there is no green grass and no water to drink, but little wells that are

very hard to find. Hagar found one of these wells and stayed there.

After a while God spoke to Hagar. He said: "Where have you come from, Hagar, and where are you going?"

Hagar said: "I am running away from Sarah because she treats me so badly. I cannot bear to live with her."

Then God answered: "Go back to Sarah and obey her, for she is your mistress and you are her servant maid. Go back and do whatever she tells you. If you are a good servant maid and do this, you shall have a baby boy who will grow up to be a strong man. He shall live in the desert country and everyone shall be afraid of him. He shall be a great fighter and he shall always win when he fights." So Hagar went back to her mistress Sarah and did whatever Sarah told her to do. She was a good servant maid. After a while she had a baby boy and she called him Ishmael.

But after Ishmael was born Hagar was proud again. She said to herself: "Sarah has no boy and I have. My boy Ishmael will grow up and when Abraham dies, Ishmael will have all the sheep and the cows and all the money that Abraham has. Sarah will not have anything. I am better than Sarah because I have a baby boy."

So Hagar would not do what Sarah told her to do, but she always quarreled with Sarah and said mean things to her. When Sarah said: "Do this work, for you are my servant maid," Hagar answered: "I am better than you, for my boy will have all Abra-

ham's sheep and cows and money after he is dead, and you have no boy at all."

Sarah felt very unhappy. She saw that it was all just because she had not believed God when He told her that she and Abraham should have a son. It was all her fault for giving her servant-maid to Abraham for his wife. But there was not anything she could do about it, for what Hagar said was true. Sarah did not have a boy, and Hagar did, so all the sheep and cows and money would go to Hagar's boy.

Sarah had to keep still when Hagar said: "I am better than you." She kept still and did not say a word, but she hated Hagar. And after awhile—you know what happened. Sarah had a baby boy too.

You remember all about that. When Sarah and Abraham were both very old, Isaac was born, just as God said he would be.

But what do you suppose Hagar said now? She said: "I am better than Sarah anyway, for my boy is the elder boy, and when Abraham dies he will have all the sheep and the cows and the money." For at that time everything always belonged to the elder boy. They did not divide things the way families do now. The elder boy had all the sheep and the cows and the land, and the younger boy had to work for the elder, and do whatever the elder boy told him to do.

Sarah was very angry when Hagar said this, for she was just a little afraid that it might be true. But she only laughed and said: "Even if he is the older, he is just the son of a servant-maid. He would not count at all now that I have a boy of my own."

But Hagar answered: "All the same he is older and he will have the money." So Sarah grew more and more angry at Hagar.

Then Sarah went to Abraham and said: "Hagar laughs at me and at Isaac and says: 'My boy Ishmael is the older and Ishmael will have all the cows and sheep and money when Abraham dies.'"

But Abraham answered her: "Even if she is my wife, she is still your servant maid. She must do whatever you tell her to do."

So Sarah treated Hagar very cruelly. She gave her harder and harder work to do. But whenever Hagar looked at her little boy, she laughed and said: "Ishmael is stronger than Isaac, and even if Abraham does not give him the sheep, Ishmael will take them away from Isaac for himself." But she never told this to Sarah.

The years went by and Isaac grew to be a boy instead of just a baby. But Ishmael was always older than Isaac, and he always teased him and quarreled with him.

Abraham punished Ishmael for being so mean to his little brother, but Ishmael never cared. Why do you suppose he did not care? It was because his mother laughed and said: "I want you to be mean to Isaac. I hate Isaac's mother." That was a dreadful thing for a mother to say to her little boy, but Hagar said it. She made Ishmael hate Isaac.

And Isaac used to tease Ishmael too. Sarah told him to do it. Isaac heard his mother quarreling with Hagar and he remembered what they said. And the next time when Ishmael took something away from

him, Isaac said: "Bring that back to me, for you are only a servant boy and the son of a servant girl."

Ishmael answered: "I am the elder son of Abraham and my mother says that when Abraham dies, I shall have all the sheep and cows and money."

Then Isaac laughed and said: "Even if you are elder, and even if you are stronger, still you are only a servant boy. For my mother says you shall never have all the sheep and the cows and the money, but that when I grow up you shall be my servant."

Ishmael replied: "What do I care what your mother says?" And Isaac answered: "What do I care for yours? She is only a servant girl."

This made Ishmael very angry and he ran at Isaac and knocked him down. So Isaac began to cry, for he was only a little boy, and he came and told his mother.

When Sarah heard what Isaac said, she was more angry than she had ever been before. She said to herself: "I can never live in the same place with Hagar. She must go away."

So Sarah came to Abraham and said: "Ishmael is making fun of Isaac because his mother tells him to. He is stronger than Isaac and takes everything away from Isaac. Send Hagar and Ishmael away. Do not let them stay here with my boy Isaac. For if you do, they will take all the sheep and cows and money when you die."

Abraham was very sad because Hagar was so mean to Sarah and because Ishmael made fun of Isaac. But he was a good man and he did not want to send Hagar away for he was afraid that she would die.

He thought that if they stayed together they might learn to stop quarreling after a while.

So Abraham said: "I cannot send Hagar and Ishmael away. They would die in the desert where there is no food and water."

But that night God spoke to Abraham. He said: "Do not be afraid to do what Sarah tells you to do. For Hagar and Ishmael shall not die. Ishmael must grow up in the desert and be a great fighting man. Isaac was the boy I promised you and he shall help make a great people."

The next morning Abraham rose up early, and took some bread and a bottle of water and gave it to Hagar and said: "Take food and water and your son Ishmael and go out into the desert to live."

So Hagar took the bread and the water and her boy Ishmael and went far, far away into the desert. She wandered a long way over the hot, dry ground, and all the time she looked for a well where she could get some more water. But after a while all the water in her bottle was gone and there was no well.

Hagar said: "I wish I had done as Sarah told me to do. But I quarreled all the time and made fun of her and now I am out in the desert without water, Ishmael and I shall die."

Then Ishmael began to cry for water, and Hagar had no water to give him. So Hagar said: "I will hide Ishmael under one of these bushes and go a little way off, for I cannot bear to look at him when he dies."

So Hagar hid Ishmael under a bush and went a little way off, so that she would not have to see him

die. She began to cry because there was no water and her boy was dying. After a while she began to ask God to help her. She said: "My boy is dying for water because I quarreled with Sarah and was sent away into the desert. But if you will save him, I will always do everything good that you want me to do."



HAGAR GIVING ISHMAEL TO DRINK.

God answered Hagar and said: "Why are you afraid, Hagar? Go to the boy Ishmael and lift him up, for you shall soon find plenty of water. And Ishmael shall grow up and be a great, strong man and a fighter."

So Hagar opened her eyes and what do you suppose she saw in front of her?

She saw a well of water. She was very thirsty, but she did not even stop to get a drink for herself. She ran back to the bush where she had put Ishmael, and she took him in her arms and ran with him to the well and gave him plenty of water.

So Ishmael and Hagar lived in the desert country and Ishmael grew up to be a strong man and a great

fighter. He could use a bow and arrow better than any other man, even better than his brother Isaac.

When he grew up he married a wife from the great land of Egypt, and was the father of twelve princes. They all lived in the desert, and all their children lived in the desert and they were all strong men and great fighters.

QUESTIONS

What was the name of the boy who lived in the desert alone with his mother?

Why did Sarah hate Hagar?

Why did Hagar hate Sarah?

How many times did Hagar go away from her home?

What made her go back the first time?

When Sarah had a baby boy did she stop quarreling with Hagar?

What happened when Isaac grew up?

Why did Abraham send Hagar away?

Why did not Hagar and Ishmael die in the desert?

What happened to Ishmael afterwards?

What kind of a man was he?

What was his occupation?

Where did his children live?

THE SIXTH STORY

REBECCA, THE GIRL AT THE WELL



REMEMBER the story of Abraham and his son Isaac, and how Isaac was born when Abraham was an old man, and how Abraham loved Isaac. You surely do remember it, do you not? And you remember how, when God wanted to see how much Abraham

loved God, He told him to give Him Isaac. And you remember how Abraham was going to give everything to God, even his best loved boy.

Well, Abraham grew older and older, and after a while it came time for him to die. So he began to think of what would happen to Isaac. Isaac was nearly grown up now, and before long he would have to hunt for a wife.

Abraham was afraid that Isaac would marry some of the bad women who lived in the land of Canaan. Do you remember a man who married his daughters to the bad men in the city of Sodom? Yes, Lot. But Abraham did not want to have Isaac marry one of the women who lived in the land of Canaan.



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THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC.

So Abraham called his servant to him, the very best servant he had, and said to him: "I am a very old man, and the time of my death is near. But swear to me by God who rules the heaven and the earth, that you will not bring my son Isaac a wife from the women who live in this land."

The servant said: "Where then shall I find him a wife, my master?"

Abraham answered: "Go into the eastern land from which I came, and where all of my people live, and bring a wife from my own people."

But the servant said: "If I go to the eastern land and find a good and beautiful woman, she will not come here to this desert country to your son Isaac. Let me take Isaac himself back to the eastern land and he shall live there with the wife he finds."

This made Abraham angry and he said: "You shall never take my son Isaac to the eastern country, for if you do he will stay there. God called me to leave my father's house and the land of my people to come here to the land where I live now. This is the land where Isaac, my son, must live."

Then the servant said: "But if I go to the eastern country without Isaac, and find a woman, she will not come back with me."

But Abraham answered: "Swear to me by God who is King of heaven and earth, that you will do this for me. Go eastward and ever eastward till you find the woman who is good and beautiful enough for my son Isaac. And if she will not come with you, then you shall come back alone. But you shall not take my son Isaac to the eastern country."

So the servant swore to Abraham that he would seek for the good and beautiful woman who should be the wife of Isaac and that he would try to bring her back again.

Then the servant took ten camels with him and set out on his way. He took with him golden rings and golden bracelets and many wonderful gifts to give the woman he chose for Isaac. He loaded his camels with food and water and rode eastward for many days and nights.

Every day he passed many beautiful women, but he knew in his heart that none of them was the right one. Every night the great big white stars looked down on his tent. Then he looked up at the stars and asked God to send him to the right place and to show him the good and beautiful maiden he should choose for his master Isaac.

So he rode and rode till at last he came to a city. He said: "Is this the city of Nahor?" and they answered "Yes, this is the city of Nahor." Then the servant knew that he was in the place where Abraham had once lived, and that the end of his way had come.

The servant said to himself: "This is the city, but how shall I find the best and most beautiful maiden, the one whom I shall take to my master Isaac?" So he went outside the city and stopped his camels by the well, where all the people of the city came for water.

Then he prayed to God, and he said: "Oh, God, how shall I find the maiden who shall be the wife of my master Isaac? Shall I look for the most beautiful

maiden, or for the richest maiden, or for what kind of a maiden shall I look?"

Suddenly he thought of a way and he stood up and said: "I will look for the maiden with the kindest heart, and this is the way I will find her. In the evening time when the maidens of the city come out to get the water, I will say to them: "Give me some water to drink."

"Then if one of them answers, 'I will draw water for the camels also,' I will know that she is the kindest-hearted maiden, and I will take her home to my master Isaac."

Now the well was very deep and it was very hard work to pull up a bucket of water. And camels are very thirsty animals. They can drink buckets and buckets of water.

The servant knew that a maiden who would draw up enough water for all his ten camels just because she was kind-hearted and did not want to see them be thirsty, would be the kindest-hearted girl he could find anywhere.

Just then out of the gate there came a beautiful maiden, the most beautiful he had ever seen. And the servant said to himself: "I will ask her to marry Isaac, for she is very beautiful." But then he thought of what he had just decided and he said: "No, beauty is not everything. Suppose she should be cross and mean. I must try her as I said and see what she will do for the camels."

The beautiful maiden came up to the well to draw some water. She looked at the stranger who was standing there and she looked at all his thirsty cam-

els. Then the servant said: "Give me a little water from your pitcher."

So the maiden put down the pitcher and poured him out some water and he drank it. But he thought: "Nobody would ever be kind-hearted enough to draw



THE GIRL AT THE WELL

water for all those thirsty camels. I wish I had tried something easier." So he drank very slowly wondering what she would do.

The beautiful maiden looked at the camels, and she saw how thirsty they were. Then she remembered that she had to hurry home to help with the work. It would take a long time to draw enough water for all those camels. But she looked again. The stranger had no pail or pitcher or anything to pull water out with and the camels were very thirsty.

So the beautiful maiden said: "I will draw out water for the camels also, if you wish it." Then she put her pitcher in and pulled out water for all ten camels, one after another.

Abraham's servant was very happy. "I have found the best wife in the world for Isaac," he said. He took a golden ring and two golden bracelets and gave them to the maiden and said: "Who are you, O beautiful maiden, and who is your father? Is there room enough for a stranger to stay with you?"

Then the maiden answered: "I am Rebecca, and my father's name is Bethuel. There is plenty of room at home for strangers and there is plenty of food for your camels."

The servant bowed his head and prayed: "O God," he said, "I thank you for bringing me here to the house of Rebecca, the daughter of Bethuel, and for showing me that she is to be Isaac's wife." For the servant knew that Rebecca's father was one of Abraham's people, and that he had come to the right place.

So Rebecca ran home and told her mother all that had happened. When her brother Laban saw the golden ring and the golden bracelets that the stranger had given his sister he ran out of the house till he came to the well. And he said: "Come into our house,

for there is plenty of room and food for the camels." So Abraham's servant went in.

But when they brought food for Abraham's servant to eat, he stood up and said: "I will not eat of your food until I have told you the reason why I came."

Then they said: "Tell us."

He said to them: "I am Abraham's servant. My master is an old man and ready to die, but before he dies he wants a wife for his son. He sent me to seek for one and he said: 'Go into the eastern country to my own people, for my son Isaac must not marry one of the wicked women of this land.' So I took ten camels and rode till I came here.

"And when I stood by the well outside the city I prayed to God to show me the kindest-hearted maiden of all the maidens in the city, and I said: 'She shall be the maiden who shall draw water for all of my thirsty camels without being asked to do it.' And when your daughter Rebecca came I found that she was the kindest-hearted maiden I had ever known.

"So now it is the will of God that Rebecca should go back with me to my master Abraham to marry Isaac his son. And I will give you silver and gold and precious things as a present from my master. And now if you will do this, let me know; but if not, tell me. For if you will not do this, then I must look somewhere else."

Then the family all said: "It is a very strange thing, but it seems to be the will of God. Behold, Rebecca is before thee; take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife."

And it came to pass that when Abraham's servant heard these words he bowed himself to the ground before them. And he brought forth beautiful things of gold, and beautiful things of silver, and beautiful clothes, and gave them to Rebecca. He also gave beautiful and precious things to every member of the family.

So they made a great feast for Rebecca, a feast that lasted nearly all the night. And the next morning the servant said: "Send me away now to my master, for he is waiting and wondering what maiden I shall bring."

But they said to him: "Let the maiden wait for a few days, for it is too soon for her to leave her home, and she cannot be ready yet." But the servant said: "Do not keep me any longer, for I wish to return to my master."

Then they all said: "Rebecca herself shall decide." So they called her and said: "Wilt thou go with this man now, or wilt thou remain at home for a few days? For surely there must be much to be done before such a long journey."

But Rebecca said: "I am ready now. Let us go at once."

So they sent away Rebecca and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. They all said good-bye, and they called after her: "O sister, may you have many children and live very happily in the new land to which you are going."

Then Rebecca and the servant went on their camels over the desert. They rode and rode for many days and nights. And always Rebecca wondered what

kind of a man Isaac would be. For how would you like to be going away to marry a man you had never seen? But Rebecca had heard of Abraham and she knew that Isaac was a good man, and that was the most important thing.

One evening Isaac went out to walk in a field and to think about the maiden that the servant had gone to bring him. The night was coming on and the desert country was growing darker and darker and the first little stars were coming out. All at once Isaac lifted up his eyes and behold, there were camels coming.

Just at the same time Rebecca looked and saw a man walking in the field. She said to the servant: "Who is that man over there?" And the servant answered: "It is my master, Isaac, and at last we have reached home."

Rebecca took a long veil and put it on her head, for that is the way the maidens do in that country before they are married. They must keep their faces veiled when they meet the man they are going to marry.

Then the servant told Isaac all that he had done, and how he had found Rebecca. And Isaac loved Rebecca. And he took her to his mother's tent and she became his wife. And they lived happily for many, many years.

QUESTIONS

What did Abraham do about finding a wife for his son Isaac?

Why did not Abraham want his son to marry one of the girls in the land where he lived?

Who went to get a wife for Isaac?

What kind of a maiden did he want to get?

How did he think he would find the kindest-hearted maiden?

Why would drawing water for all the camels prove that the maiden was very kind-hearted?

What was the name of the maiden the servant chose?

What did Rebecca's family think of the servant when they saw the golden rings and bracelets?

What did they do when they knew what the servant wanted?

Do you think the servant was wise to choose the kindest-hearted maiden instead of only looking to see if she were beautiful?



THE SEVENTH STORY

THE BROTHERS WHO QUARRELED



EVEN if two boys are brothers, and grow up as playmates, they do not always love each other as they ought. There is a story about two such boys. Will you listen to it?

Once upon a time there were two brothers who hated each other for many long years. The older brother was named Esau. He was a fierce looking boy with long, red, bushy hair, very ugly and very strong. The younger brother was named Jacob, and his mother loved him the best, because he was always kind to her.

Who do you suppose the father of these two brothers was? It was Isaac. You remember all about Isaac, and how he married Rebecca. Rebecca was the mother of the two boys.

The two boys grew and grew. Esau loved to go out hunting in the fields. He could shoot with a bow and arrow and kill big animals. But he never did any work about the home; he was always rough and hard and cruel. The only thing he liked to do was to go away from home by himself and shoot.

But Jacob was a quiet boy, and he helped his mother at home in the tent. You know that all

the people lived in tents. Rebecca loved Jacob best, because he was always helping her and because he was not rough like Esau. But Isaac loved Esau, for Esau used to kill big animals and bring them home for Isaac to eat.

One day Jacob made some bean soup. Jacob took care of the garden and of all the sheep and cows that Isaac had. Esau never took care of anything. So on this day Jacob went out into the garden and picked the beans and brought them in. Then he made some hot soup. It was very good thick soup all red in color from the red beans.

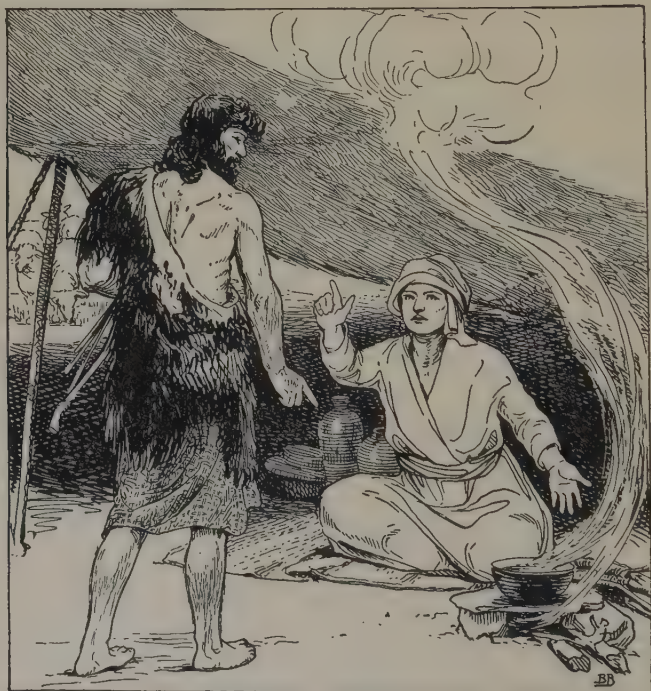
After the soup was cooked and Jacob had given some to his mother and father and had just enough left for himself, Esau came in. Esau had not been doing any work all day. He had been out hunting. But he had not found any animals to kill and he was very hungry. So he said to Jacob: "Give me that soup."

Jacob was very angry. "I have worked hard all day," he said, "and I am hungry too. You have been wandering around in the fields and have done nothing, and now you want my soup. But it is mine and you cannot have any. Make some for yourself if you want to."

That was not a very kind thing for Jacob to do, was it? But then Esau had not spoken kindly in the first place.

Then Esau said: "I have no time to make any more soup for myself. I would starve before it was done, for I am very hungry. Give me what you have made."

So Jacob said to Esau: "You are a good-for-nothing boy and you do not do any of the work. But just because you are the older son, all of our father's sheep and cows and money will be yours when he dies. All the work I have done will not count. I have taken care of the sheep and cows, but they will all be yours. Do you think I have nothing better to do than to make soup for you also?"



JACOB AND ESAU

But Esau said: "What do I care about all that? I am hungry and I want that soup. I will give you anything you ask for it."

Then suddenly Jacob thought of something. "I

tell you what I will do," he said. "I will give you the soup if you will let me be the elder son instead of you."

Was not that a funny thing to ask? How could Jacob be the elder son just by Esau's saying so? But Jacob meant that Esau should give him all the things that an elder son gets. The oldest son used to get all the sheep and cows and money, everything that belonged to his father. The younger sons had to do just what he told them after his father died. For he was head of the whole family. So Jacob wanted Esau to let him have that place instead.

Then Esau said: "What good does it do me to be the elder son when I am starving to death for that soup? I will give you that or anything else you want."

Jacob answered: "Swear to me then that whatever comes to the oldest son shall be mine and that you will never ask for it." So Esau swore it and said: "I promise you that I will give you the place of the elder son, and everything that belongs to the elder son you shall have." Then Jacob gave Esau the soup, and Esau ate it in a hurry for he was very hungry.

Now what do you think of boys like that? They were not very good boys, were they? What do you think of a boy who cares so much about eating that he will give away his place as elder son just because he is hungry and wants some soup? And what do you think of another boy who would make his brother do that, instead of giving him some of the soup anyway? I do not think much of them, do you?

But all this time Isaac, who was Jacob's and Esau's father, never cared at all what Esau had said about letting Jacob be the elder son. For Isaac loved Esau and wanted to give him the best place anyway.

So, many years went by, and Isaac grew very old, so that he could not see, and at last he knew that the time was near when he must die. Then he sent for Esau.

Esau came to him and said: "Here I am father." And he touched Isaac, so that Isaac could know he was there, for Isaac could not see.

Then Isaac said: "My son, I am a very old man, and I can not tell how soon I shall die. So take your bow and arrows, and go out into the field and bring me home some meat to eat. When I have eaten it I will give you the blessing that belongs to the oldest son."

So Esau took his bow and arrows and went out into the field to hunt. He went farther and farther and farther, but he did not find any animals to kill. So he went on and on, still hunting for some meat to take back to his father.

When Rebecca heard what Isaac said to Esau, she felt very sad. For she wanted Jacob to have the blessing instead. So she said to Jacob: "Your father is going to give Esau the blessing that belongs to the oldest son, and then everything your father has will go to Esau. But take two young goats from the flock and kill them, and I will cook them for your father. Then you can take them in to him before Esau comes back, and you will get his blessing instead."

But Jacob answered: "My brother's skin is all hairy and my skin is smooth. My father will know that I am not Esau." But his mother said: "Do as I tell you."



ISAAC AND JACOB.

So Jacob killed two young goats, and his mother cooked them, and Jacob took them to his father. But first he put the hairy skin of the goats on his hands, so that his father would think he was Esau.

When Isaac had eaten all the good meat that Jacob brought him he said to him: "Come here and let me feel you, my son, for your voice sounds like Jacob's voice. Are you really my son Esau?"

And Jacob said: "Of course I am your son Esau." So he went up to Isaac, and Isaac felt his hands, and the hands were all hairy like Esau's. Then Isaac smelt his clothes and they smelt like Esau's too, for Rebecca had given Jacob some of Esau's clothes to wear. So Isaac said: "Your voice is like the voice of Jacob, but I must be growing old and hard of hearing, for your hands are Esau's hands."

So Isaac blessed Jacob and said: "O my son, you shall be a great man, and you shall be the father of a great nation. All of your brothers shall be your servants. And everyone that is good to you shall be happy, but whoever hates you shall be unhappy. You shall be rich and great all your life."

As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob and had kissed him, and Jacob had gone out from the room, Esau himself came back. He had been very far away looking for some meat for his father and at last he had found it. So he brought it home and cooked it, and took it in to Isaac, and said: "Father, I have brought the meat you wanted. Give me your blessing."

Then Isaac was afraid and said: "Who are you?"

Esau answered: "I am Esau, your elder son."

Isaac cried aloud and said: "Who was it then that came in a little while ago and brought me meat to eat and asked for my blessing? I have given my blessing already and I cannot give it again."

When Esau heard this and saw how Jacob had been ahead of him, he was very angry, and he said: "My brother Jacob has come before me and taken my place, and he has cheated me out of your blessing. But I am Esau your elder son. Give me a blessing also."

Then Isaac answered: "I have already told him that he should be greater. What more can I do for you?"

But Esau cried aloud a dreadful cry, and said: "Have you only one blessing to give, my father? Give me some kind of a blessing."

So Isaac put his hands on Esau's head and said: "You shall be a strong man, my son, and a great fighter. You shall live in the fields and hunt all your life. You shall be your brother's servant but you shall be so strong that he shall be afraid of you always, and after many, many years you shall be free."

So Isaac gave both his sons a blessing, but Jacob had stolen the best blessing. And Esau hated Jacob because of the way he had cheated him, and Jacob was afraid of Esau. So the two brothers kept on hating each other, and there was never a happy home again. That was what happened because both of the boys tried to get the best place.

QUESTIONS

What were the names of the two boys who hated each other?

Which one did Isaac like best? Why?

Which one did their mother Rebecca like best?

When Esau came in hungry one day what did he find?

What did he tell Jacob he would give him for the soup?

What would it mean to be oldest son?

What do you think of the way those boys behaved?

What did Isaac want to do when he was old?

What did he say to Esau?

What did Jacob do to get his father's blessing?

What did Esau say when he found it out?

What did Isaac do for Esau?

How did Esau and Jacob feel about each other?



THE EIGHTH STORY

THE BOY WHO WENT TO SEEK HIS FORTUNE



JUST remember the story you have heard about two brothers who quarreled and fought all the time, until one of them cheated the other and stole his father's blessing. This time you will hear what happened afterward when Isaac died.

Esau hated Jacob more and more. Jacob had cheated him out of everything he wanted and the more he thought about Jacob the more angry he grew. So he said to himself: "After a while my father will die, and then I will kill my brother Jacob, for he will not be strong enough to fight me, and there will be no one left who can punish me."

Then Rebecca heard what Esau had said and she was afraid. For she loved Jacob better than she loved Esau, and she had helped Jacob cheat his father. But she knew that Esau was a strong, fierce man and she was afraid of what he would do to his brother.

So she called Jacob and said to him: "Your brother Esau is going to kill you, because you cheated him, and because he hates you for it. So listen to me. You must leave home and go to your uncle's house

and stay there with him until Esau no longer remembers his anger. He will forget the things you have done, and will not wish to kill you. Then I will send for you and let you come again. But if you should be killed I should want to die also."

Jacob said: "But where is my uncle's house? I have never been there. Is it not very far away?"

His mother answered: "Many years ago when I was only a maiden I lived in an eastern country and my brother Laban lives there still. And one day I went down to the well to get some water and I saw a stranger standing by the well with ten camels. He was Abraham's servant and he had come to look for a wife for Isaac. So my brother Laban gave him a feast and the stranger gave us presents of gold and silver and beautiful clothes, and brought me here to be Isaac's wife. But my brother Laban still lives in the eastern country and you must go to him."

Then Jacob said: "How shall I find him?"

"You must ride and ride for many days," said Rebecca, "until you come to a city in the eastern country. Ask there for Laban, and they will tell you where he lives. For he is a great man."

Then Jacob said to his mother: "I should be glad to go away to my uncle Laban's house, but how do I know that my father will let me go? For he loves my brother Esau, and he will not believe that Esau wishes to kill me. He will make me stay here at home."

Rebecca wondered how she could make Isaac let Jacob go away. At last she said: "I know what we will do. We will not tell Isaac the real reason. But I will say to him that the time is near for you to seek

a wife, and that I do not wish you to marry any of the women in this land. And then Isaac will let you go to the eastern country to find a wife."

So Rebecca went in to Isaac to talk to him about Jacob. She did not tell her real reason, for Isaac loved Esau. She said: "Jacob will soon be old enough to choose a wife, and why should he marry one of the strange women who live in this country? I will send him to my brother Laban, and he shall find a wife there in the eastern land from which I came."

Then Isaac said: "You have spoken truly. I myself will call Jacob and send him away." And Rebecca was pleased because her plan had worked so well.

Isaac called Jacob and said to him: "You are old enough to be married. But your mother does not like the women who live in this country. And my father Abraham himself, when he wanted a wife for me, would not take any of the women of this land, but sent away to the eastern country for Rebecca. So now you must go east till you come to the house of Laban, your uncle, and there you must choose your wife."

So Jacob left home, because he was afraid of his brother Esau. In the daytime he rode and at night he camped out under the stars. One night when he was asleep, he dreamed a strange dream.

He saw a ladder set up from earth to heaven, and he saw angels going up and down on the ladder. And God stood above the ladder and said: "I am God. I took care of Abraham and I took care of Isaac and I will care for you. Your children shall be like the

dust of the earth, so that no man can count them. I will bless you, and keep you wherever you go, and will bring you again to this land after many years."

Then Jacob awoke and he said: "God is in this place and I did not know it."



JACOB LEAVING HOME.

You see the people in Jacob's time thought that God could not be in every place. They did not know that God could be everywhere and that He loves us always and that we can talk to Him no matter where

we are. So Jacob was surprised to find that God was with him even after he had left home.

Jacob went farther and farther till he came to the eastern land. At last he saw a well in a field and near it were three flocks of sheep. For the people had to bring their sheep to wells to get water for them to drink.

Then Jacob said to the shepherds: "Who are you, and where do you live?"

And they said: "We live in the city of Haran."

Jacob said: "Do you know Laban?"

They answered: "We know him. And there is his daughter Rachel coming to water the sheep."

So when Jacob saw Rachel, he ran to the well and rolled back the big stone from the top of it and drew water for Rachel's sheep. And he said: "I have come to see Laban, my uncle, my mother's brother." Then he kissed Rachel and went home with her.

As soon as Laban saw Jacob and heard that Rebecca was his mother, he was very glad. He kissed Jacob and brought him into his house. Jacob stayed there for a month and worked for Laban, for Laban was a rich man and had many sheep and many cows and he needed men to take care of them.

But after a month was over, Laban saw that Jacob was a very good worker, and he was afraid that he might lose him, so he said: "Because I am your uncle there is no reason why you should work for me for nothing. I will pay you for your work. What will you ask me to pay you?"

Now Laban had two daughters. The older was named Leah, and the younger was Rachel. Rachel

was very beautiful, and Jacob had loved her when he first saw her at the well. So Jacob said to Laban: "I love your younger daughter Rachel, but I have not money enough to have a wife. If I work for you seven years will you give Rachel to me?"

Laban was very glad. He thought: "This silly Jacob! He will work for a whole seven years for my daughter. And he is a good worker, too." So he said to Jacob: "It would be better for her to marry you than to marry anyone else. Stay here with me."

So Jacob worked for Laban for seven years. Every morning when he went out to work he sang, for he was very happy. For he thought of Rachel and how he was working for her. And every evening when he came back he said: "One more day of the seven years is gone." All this time no word came from his mother Rebecca and his brother Esau. So Jacob stayed with Laban.

At the end of that time he said to his uncle: "Give me my wife now, as you promised me. I have worked for you seven years."

So Laban made a great feast. He invited all the men who lived in the city, and he killed his best sheep and ate them. He made the finest feast there had ever been for Jacob's wedding.

Now you know when they have a wedding in the eastern country, the bride must wear a long veil. It comes down over her face and no one can see what she looks like. Even the man she marries cannot see her face till after the wedding.

After the feast was over and the people were all gone away, Jacob lifted up the veil and what do you

think he saw? It was Leah instead of Rachel he had married.

This made Jacob very angry. Laban had cheated him just the way he had cheated his brother Esau. But Jacob did not like to be cheated himself. So he sent for Laban.

"I worked for you seven years," he said, "because I loved Rachel, and now you have given me Leah instead. Why have you cheated me?"

But Laban answered: "In the eastern country the oldest girl must be married first. That is the way it is always done. But I will give you Rachel too, if you want her. Only you must work for me seven years more."

So Jacob worked seven years more for Rachel. And he married both the sisters.

That is how it happened that Jacob cheated his brother and then got cheated himself. He had to be punished so that he could learn to be good to his brother Esau. He had to stay away from home for years and years.

It was a long time before Jacob went home again. His father died and his mother died, and still his brother Esau hated him and he had to stay away. But after a while, when he grew to be a man, he went back home. And he lived in the land of Canaan where Abraham and Isaac had lived.

QUESTIONS

What did Esau want to do to Jacob when his father was growing old?

What did Rebecca do to save Jacob's life?

What did she say to Isaac to get him to let Jacob go?

Where did Jacob journey?

What wonderful dream did Jacob have?

What did Jacob know about God after he had the dream?

Can you talk to God no matter what part of the world you are in?

Whom did Jacob meet when he came to the eastern country?

To whose house did he go?

Did his uncle want Jacob to stay and work for him?

What did Jacob ask for his work?

What did his uncle do when it was time for Jacob to marry Rachel?

Did that serve Jacob right for cheating his brother?

How long did Jacob have to work for Rachel?

What lesson did Jacob have to learn?

Did Jacob go back to Canaan?

How many sons did he have?

Do you know the names of any of them?



THE NINTH STORY

THE BOY WHOSE BROTHERS HATED HIM



JOURNEYS are sometimes pleasant, and sometimes not. This is the story of a boy who took a long journey and at first was very unhappy, but something happened afterward.

Once upon a time there were twelve brothers. The next to the youngest one was named Joseph, and the youngest one was only a baby. So he does not count. The twelve boys were the sons of Jacob.

Jacob's sons had a great deal of work to do to help their father. They had to care for all his sheep. They had to do the farm work and raise the wheat and barley. So they worked very hard in the fields all day and when night came they were so tired that they went to sleep and did not even dream. All but Joseph.

Joseph used to lie awake and dream about what he would do when he grew up. Do you know any boys who dream about what they will do when they grow up? I would not think much of a boy who did not wonder about such things. Joseph wanted to be a great man, greater than all his brothers.

One night Joseph dreamed a strange dream. The next morning he came into his father's tent when all the other brothers were there and said: "You never could guess what I dreamed last night. It was the most wonderful dream that ever was." But none of the brothers took any notice, for they did not care about Joseph and his dreams. They thought he was just a little boy.

But Jacob, his father, said to him: "Well, Joseph, tell us about your dream."

Then Joseph said: "I dreamed that we were all of us tying up the wheat in the field, when suddenly my bundle of wheat stood up very tall and straight. And what do you suppose my brothers' bundles all did? They all began bowing to my bundle, as if it were king over them."

Do you see what Joseph's dream meant? It meant that he was going to be so great that his brothers would all have to bow down to him and kneel to him, as if he were their king. Do you wonder that his brothers were very angry at his dream?

So they all made fun of Joseph and said: "So you think you will be our king, do you? You are only our younger brother. You are too young even to go out with the sheep, and you cannot do very much work in the field. And you are going to be king over us, are you?" And the brothers were very angry with Joseph and said everything they could to tease him, because he thought he was going to be a great man.

But Jacob, his father, said: "Never mind, Joseph, you will grow up, and do great things in the world some day. But you must not say things to make



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JOSEPH TELLING HIS DREAM.

your brothers angry, for they are great men, too, and they do good work with the sheep and corn."

Jacob took care of his boy Joseph, and would not let the other brothers hurt him. He kept him with him in the tent most of the time when he sent the others out to work. And he gave him a beautiful coat, which was finer than anything his brothers had. This made the brothers still more angry, for they said: "Our father cares more for our younger brother than he does for us. He makes us work harder, and he gives Joseph the finest clothes. He isn't fair to us." So they hated Joseph and used every chance they had to tease him.

But Joseph kept on dreaming of what he would do when he grew up. The land where he lived was a desert land, where the rain does not come very often, and where the stars are very bright. So night after night Joseph would lie on the hard ground of the desert and look up at the stars, and think of the time that was going to come. Then one night he had another dream.

Next day Joseph told his dream. He said: "I dreamed last night that I was standing in a field, and what do you suppose happened? The sun and the moon and eleven stars came right up to me and bowed down before me!"

The older brothers went out of the tent in great anger. For you see this dream meant even more than the other one. It meant that his father and mother would bow down to him also. The sun meant his father, and the moon meant his mother, and the stars meant his brothers. No wonder the brothers were

angry. They went out one by one, till Joseph was left alone with his father.

Then Jacob said to his son: "Joseph, you must not make your brothers so angry. It is good for a boy to expect great things, and to want to be a great man. But you are growing too proud. Do you really think that the time will come when you shall be king, not only over your brothers, but over your mother and your father also? You think too much of yourself, Joseph."

So after this Joseph kept still about his dreams. For he saw that his brothers did not want to hear them, and that even his father thought he was too proud. But he kept on dreaming.

You remember that the country where Joseph lived was a desert. Have you ever seen a desert? There are big deserts in the United States—places where nothing will grow because there is no water. The ground is all hot dry sand, or hard dirt, with just a few dry dusty bushes and just a little dry dusty grass.

But every here and there in a desert you will come to a place where there is a well or a little spring of water. Near that water there will be grass and beautiful trees. Men can live there and raise corn and wheat and vegetables, because they do not have to wait for the rain that almost never comes; they can use the spring instead.

It was on a place like this that Joseph and his brothers lived and raised corn. But of course a little spot of green grass around a spring was not enough for all the sheep and cows to live on. So Joseph's ten

big brothers used to take the sheep and drive them a long way off, hunting for good grass. When they came to a place of grass that did not belong to anyone, they would stop there till the sheep ate it all up. Then they would go on and hunt for another place.

One day Joseph's father said to him: "Your brothers have been away from home for a long time, and I have not heard from them. Go northward and hunt for them and find out how they are getting on with their sheep, and bring me back word of them."

So Joseph put on his beautiful new coat, and started on his journey. He went for a long way north, till he came to where his brothers had been. But they were not there any longer for the sheep had eaten up all the grass in that place and they had gone somewhere else. So Joseph looked this way and that way, and he wandered around for a long time looking for his brothers. At last he met a man.

The man said to him: "What are you looking for in this empty field?"

And Joseph said: "I am hunting for my brothers who came here to feed their sheep."

Then the man said: "I heard them say: 'We will go still further north, for there is not enough grass here.'"

So Joseph left the man and set out after his brothers. And after a long journey he saw the sheep far off in the distance and knew that he had found them.

Just about the same time the ten brothers looked up and saw Joseph coming. They hated him. For Joseph had dreamed that he was going to be king over them, and he had a more beautiful coat than they had,

and he was only their younger brother. They hated Joseph and wanted to kill him.

One of them said: "Here comes this boy who dreams all those fine dreams about being king over us. Let us kill him and hide his body in one of the empty holes in the desert, and no one will ever know. Then we will tell our father that a wild animal must have eaten him. We are a long way off from home, and it is a dangerous road, and our father will believe us."

Not one of them cared about the long hard journey Joseph had made, just to see his brothers; they all of them hated him.

But one of them was better than the rest. His name was Reuben, and he was the oldest of them all. So he said: "We must not kill him ourselves for he is our brother. We will throw him into a deep hole in the desert, and he cannot get out. Then either a wild animal will eat him, or else he will die of hunger. That will be better than for us to kill him ourselves."

You see the thing Reuben really wanted to do was to have Joseph put into this deep hole in the ground where he would be quite safe. Then as soon as the other brothers were gone, Reuben was going to come and get Joseph out again and send him back home to his father. Reuben did not want to have Joseph killed. So the brothers agreed to put Joseph into a deep hole, like a well in the ground, and leave him there.

Joseph was glad to see his brothers. He had been looking for them for a long time, and he had been all alone in the desert country where there are

wild animals. So he was glad to know that he had reached the end of his journey. But just as he came near to them and began to say: "Father sent me to find out how you were getting on with the sheep," they took hold of him and tied him and threw him into a deep well. There was no water in the



JOSEPH IN THE PIT.

well any longer; the sun had dried it up. But it was very dark and cold. Then the brothers all sat down to eat their dinner, leaving Joseph all alone in the well. While they were eating, suddenly they looked up, and what do you suppose they saw? Camels,

and camels and camels—lots of them. Do you know what camels are? They are the kind of animals that people use for horses in the desert, because they can carry a great deal, and because they can go for a long time without water.

These camels were loaded with perfumes and oil, and spices and all kinds of precious things, and they were going down to Egypt. Egypt was the big, rich land where Pharaoh was ruler. There were a great many people, and a great deal of money in Egypt; it was not like the desert country.

When the brothers saw all these camels with the merchants who owned them, one of them said: "What is the use of letting Joseph die? If we leave him there in the hole to starve to death he will never do us any good. We might sell him as a slave to these traveling merchants. That will be the end of his dreams and his fine clothes. We shall be well rid of him."

The brothers went to the merchants and said: "Do you want to buy a slave?"

The merchants answered: "If he does not cost too much. Let us see him."

So they pulled Joseph up out of the hole. Then the merchants said: "He seems young and strong. We will give you twenty pieces of silver money for him."

And the brothers thought: "That will be two apiece all around. It is better than leaving him to die." So they sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver money. Then the merchants put Joseph on one of their camels and took him down to Egypt.

You remember the oldest brother Reuben who did

not want to kill Joseph, but was going to get him out of the well when the others were not looking. He was not with the brothers when they sold Joseph. Late in the day he came to the well, and leaned over it and called, "Joseph." But there was no answer.

After a while his eyes got used to the dark well so that he could see down, and—there was no Joseph there. Then Reuben tore his clothes and cried: "What has happened to my brother Joseph? He is not here. Perhaps the others have killed him."

Reuben went back to the other brothers to find out about Joseph. They told him that they had sold him to some men for twenty pieces of silver money. So Reuben never got the chance to take Joseph out of the well and send him home to his father. But he was very glad that his brother was not dead.

Then the brothers began to say to each other: "What shall we say to our father when he asks for Joseph?" So they took Joseph's beautiful coat that his father had given him, and tore it in pieces. Then they killed a young goat and dipped the coat in the blood and said: "When our father asks for Joseph, we will show him this coat, and say: 'This is all we ever saw of Joseph. Some wild animal must have eaten him.'"

So the brothers went home to their father. And the father said: "Where is Joseph? I sent him to find you."

They took the bloody pieces of coat and showed them to their father and said: "This is what we found. It is all we ever saw of Joseph."

Then the old father tore his clothes for sorrow and

cried aloud. "It is Joseph's coat; it is Joseph's coat. A wild animal has eaten him. I am to blame for Joseph's death, for I sent him on the long journey."

The brothers tried to comfort their father. They said: "You have other sons to take care of you. It is not your fault that Joseph is dead. Such things often happen."

But the father answered: "He was my son and I am to blame for his death. I shall weep for him till I die."

All this time Joseph was on the camel going down to Egypt. The merchants were kinder to him than his brothers had been. They gave him good food and clothes, for they wanted to sell him for a high price and they wanted him to be fat and good-looking. So when they came to Egypt, they sold Joseph as a slave to one of the chief men there, the captain of the king's own soldiers.

QUESTIONS

Why did the brothers hate Joseph?

What did Joseph think about at night?

What did he dream?

What did his dreams mean?

Where did his father send him?

What did the brothers do to Joseph?

What did they see when they sat down to eat?

What did they think would be better than killing Joseph?

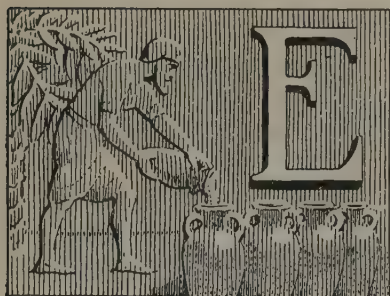
What did they do with Joseph's beautiful coat?

What did they tell their father?

What do you think of brothers like that?

THE TENTH STORY

THE STORY OF A SLAVE BOY



EVERYONE knows the story of Joseph and how he went to Egypt. Now let us learn all about what happened afterward. This is a story about a slave boy, who had everything against him because he was only a slave, but who grew up to be very great because he did his work well and was faithful to his master. Do you remember about Joseph, the boy who dreamed he was going to be king, and whose brothers hated him because of his dream? Then do you remember how those brothers were going to kill him, and how they changed their minds and sold him as a slave, and sent him down to Egypt? This is the story of what happened to him there.

The men who took Joseph down to the land of Egypt sold him to a very great man, a Captain who was near the king, and who had to protect the king from anybody who might try to hurt him. This captain gave Joseph work to do in his house. Joseph worked very hard and everything that he had to do went well.

I suppose that Joseph often thought of his old

father back in the desert land. In the evening when his work was done, he remembered the little green spot of grass around the spring of water where his father lived. He remembered how his father had sent him out to look for his brothers, and how his brothers had sold him as a slave. And I suppose he wondered what story his brothers told when they went home. Perhaps he even thought that his father would send down to Egypt to buy him back again. But his father, of course, did not know that Joseph was in Egypt. He thought he was dead.

Perhaps Joseph used to think too about the dreams he had had when he was just a little boy, and how he used to want to be a great king. There was not much chance now for him to be a great king, was there? He was just a slave. He belonged to another man and had to do just what the other man told him all his life. There does not seem to be any chance for a boy that is in a place like that, does there? But just you wait and see what happened.

No matter how badly Joseph felt about being a slave, he always did his work well. And because of this God was with him. God made things go right. Everything in the house that Joseph touched went just as it ought to go.

Joseph's master saw this. He said to himself: "Surely God is with this slave that I have bought. No other slave ever took care of things as well as he does. I will give him a better place in my house."

When Joseph got a better place in his master's house he did not stop working. He worked harder than ever. After a while Joseph's master began to

get richer and richer because of the hard work that Joseph was doing. But Joseph was a faithful slave. He never stole any of his master's money, and he never lied to him, and his master grew very rich.

So the chief captain said again: "Surely God is with Joseph. I must give him a better place still, for everything that he looks after is well done." So Joseph's master gave him the chief place among all his slaves. Joseph was the head of the whole house; only his master was greater than he.

For a long time everything went well. Then at last bad people came to the chief captain and told lies about Joseph. They said that Joseph had been doing evil things behind his master's back. They said: "Put Joseph in prison, for he has been deceiving you."

So Joseph's master believed the wicked people and put Joseph in prison. And he stayed in prison for a long, long time.

This was the worst thing that had yet happened to Joseph. When he was a slave he could move around the house and go out of doors, but now he was in a prison and he did not know whether he would ever get out again. His master left him there and forgot all about him.

But still God was with Joseph. For Joseph behaved so well that the keeper of the prison began to trust him. And little by little he gave him more and more freedom, till at last he let him manage the prison for him, and take charge of all the other prisoners.

Everything that Joseph did was well done, so the keeper let him decide about everything. Only of course, he could not go out of prison.

After a while two of the king's own servants were put into the prison. While they were there, one night they dreamed a dream. The next morning they were very much excited, for they thought the dream meant something, and they wondered what it could mean. Then Joseph said to them: "What dreams mean only God knows. But tell me what you have dreamed, and perhaps I can help you."

So they told their dreams to Joseph. And Joseph told them what he thought the dreams might mean, and what he thought was going to happen to them. Everything turned out just as Joseph had said. For Joseph was a very wise man and understood what kind of things were going to happen.

Joseph told one of the men that the king would let him out of prison and give him his place again. But Joseph told the other man that in three days the king would hang him. And both those things came true. But still Joseph stayed in prison.

After two whole years the king of all the land had a strange dream, which no one could understand. He dreamed that he was standing by the great river, and all of a sudden seven nice fat cows came up out of the water. He had never seen such fine cows. While he was looking at them, seven more cows came up from the water, but they were lean and ugly. He had never seen such dreadful looking cows.

Then the king saw in his dream that the seven lean ugly cows ate up the nice fat ones. But they were just as lean and ugly after their big meal as they had been before. The king felt very much worried, for the cows were dreadful looking things. Then he woke

up and wondered what the dream meant. But nobody could explain.

By and by one of the king's servants said: "O king, there is a very wise man named Joseph. He is in the prison now. Two years ago when I was in prison he explained my dream to me, and everything turned out just as he said. Perhaps he can explain the king's dream also."



JOSEPH BROUGHT FROM THE PRISON

So the king sent for Joseph and told his dream. And Joseph answered the king: "God only knows what dreams mean. But this is the way it seems to me. Sometimes the great river that runs through our land gives plenty of water, and then there is plenty of food. That is like fat cows coming up from

the water. But sometimes the river does not give enough water, and corn will not grow, and the people starve. That is like lean ugly cows coming up from the river.

"So now, O king, when there is plenty of food, let us build great barns and put the corn away. Then afterwards when the bad years come and there is no food, the people will not starve."

The king saw from this that Joseph was the wisest man in the whole kingdom. He saw that God was with Joseph and had shown Joseph a way to keep the people of the land from starving.

"O Joseph," said the king, "where will I find a man who can do all this?"

"He must be a very wise man," said Joseph.

"You are the wisest man in the kingdom," said the king, "and I see that God is with you. Build the barns you speak of and gather the corn together, for we have plenty of food this year."

But Joseph answered: "How can I build these barns? I have no power; I am only a slave put in prison by my master."

Then the king said: "I will make you chief ruler of all the land. No one shall be greater than you except the king himself. You shall have power to buy corn and to build barns and to do everything that seems best to you, for I see that you are very wise, and that God is with you."

The king said further to Joseph: "See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt." And the king took off his own ring and gave it to Joseph, and he put robes of fine white linen on him, and a gold chain

around his neck. And he made Joseph ride in a wonderful golden chariot, the most beautiful one in all the land except the king's own best chariot.

And slaves ran before Joseph as he rode and cried: "Bow the knee." And everyone bowed down to Joseph as he came. For he was ruler over the whole land. And the king said: "Without thy word shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt." And by this he meant that no one could do even the smallest thing unless Joseph said so.

Then the king said to Joseph: "See now, I have chosen the daughter of the high-priest for thee, and thou shalt marry her, for the high priest is very high in the land." So Joseph married the daughter of the high priest and ruled over the land of Egypt.

For seven years there was plenty of food, and Joseph took all that was left over and put it in big barns. He gathered food all over the land, from north to south and from east to west. And he built cities to keep it in. He gathered food till it was like the sand of the sea for number.

But after seven years the famine came. And there was no food. Then all the people came to Joseph for food. And they were all glad that God had sent them such a wise ruler.

QUESTIONS

Who bought Joseph for a slave?

How did Joseph behave when he was a slave?

What did his master do for him?

What did wicked men tell his master?

What did his master do then?

How did Joseph behave in the prison?

What did the keeper do?

What always happens when you do your work well?

What happened to the king of the whole land?

Why did he send for Joseph?

What did Joseph tell him?

What did the king do for Joseph?

What did Joseph do for seven years when there was plenty of food?



THE ELEVENTH STORY

THE BOY WHOM THE RULER SENT FOR



ENJAMIN was Joseph's youngest brother. You remember all about the older brothers who hated Joseph and sold him as a slave. Well, there were twelve boys in Jacob's family, the ten older brothers, and Joseph, and Benjamin.

Benjamin was the very youngest of all, and after Joseph had been lost, the father took very good care of Benjamin. He never sent him on long journeys as he had sent Joseph, but he kept him close at home so that nothing could ever happen to him. The brothers all liked Benjamin. Perhaps it was because Benjamin never had any dreams of being king and making his brothers bow down to him, or perhaps the older boys were beginning to be sorry for the way they had treated Joseph, and were trying to make it up to Benjamin. At any rate, everyone loved Benjamin; he was the most loved of all the family.

So the years went by, till a great famine came on the earth. Do you know what a famine is? It is when the rain does not come, and the corn does not grow, and there is not enough to eat. At first the little green spot by the spring where the brothers lived

furnished plenty of food, but after a while the spring began to dry up, and the brothers saw that there would not be enough water to last.

Then one of them said: "Let us go down to Egypt and buy food."

"Perhaps there is a famine in Egypt also," said another.

The first one answered: "Of course there is a famine in Egypt, but have you not heard about the great wise ruler they have there? In the long years when there was plenty to eat he saved up food and put it in big barns, and now there is grain in Egypt. We will go down and buy some."

So the ten brothers took their mules and the sacks for grain and went down to Egypt to see the great ruler. For they never once thought who the great ruler was. But of course you know who it was, for you know what had happened in Egypt. It was Joseph, their own brother. I suppose they thought that Joseph had died long before, for slaves were worked very hard and often died.

When Joseph saw the ten brothers standing before him to ask for corn, he knew them immediately. But they did not know him. Joseph had been a boy when they had seen him last, and now he was a great ruler in rich garments.

Joseph remembered his home in the desert, and his father, and his little brother Benjamin, and he could hardly keep the tears from his eyes. But he thought: "I will not tell them I am Joseph until I try them, to see how they treat my father and my little brother Benjamin."

So Joseph spoke to them angrily and said: "Who are you, and what do you want in Egypt?"

Then the brothers answered: "We are poor men who have come to buy food, for the long famine has left us without enough to eat. But we heard of the great ruler in Egypt who had saved grain for the people, and we wish to buy some." And all the brothers knelt before Joseph.

But Joseph spoke roughly and said: "You are men from the desert, and the men from the desert are enemies of Egypt. You have come to find out all about this land so that you can make war upon the Egyptians."

Then they answered: "No, great ruler, we are ten brothers, the sons of one man, and our father and youngest brother are left at home waiting for the food we shall bring them."

Joseph said: "Prove to me what you are saying." And the brothers asked him: "O great ruler, how shall we prove it?"

"One of you shall stay here in prison," said Joseph, "and the others can go back and bring the youngest brother here. Then I will know that you are telling the truth." So Joseph put Simeon, one of the brothers, in prison, and sent the others home. But he sold them all the grain they wanted. And when they opened their sacks of grain on the way home, the money they had paid was in the sacks. They were surprised and did not know what to think about it.

When the nine brothers reached home, their father asked them about their journey and they told him. "The great ruler would not believe our story," they

said, "but he asked to see our youngest brother, and he kept Simeon with him as a prisoner. He will not let him free until we go down with Benjamin."

Then Jacob wept. "You are taking away all my children," he cried. "Joseph is gone, and Simeon is gone, and you will take Benjamin away. But you shall not have Benjamin."

So for a long time they stayed in the desert with their father and did not go down to Egypt. Then at last Jacob said: "We will soon have no more food, for the rains have not come yet, and this is a very great famine. Go down to Egypt again and buy more grain."

The brothers answered: "The ruler told us we should never come again without our youngest brother." And Jacob cried aloud: "Then Benjamin must go or we shall all starve in the desert." So the brothers all came down to Egypt again, and Benjamin was with them.

When Joseph saw Benjamin, he could hardly keep from calling out that he was Joseph. Then the brothers came near to him and bowed down before him and said: "O great ruler, we have brought our youngest brother to prove to you that we told the truth. And we have brought the money which we found in our sacks and some more money to buy corn. Give us back Simeon and let us go."

Joseph said to his servants: "Prepare a great feast in my palace, for these men shall come there to eat." So he invited them all to a great feast. And when they came to sit down, Joseph put them all in order from the oldest to the youngest, so that they all won-

dered how he knew their ages. They thought he must be a very wise man, or some great magician.

So Joseph held a feast for his brothers and gave them the finest things in all the land of Egypt to eat. But to Benjamin he gave five times as much as to the



JOSEPH'S FEAST.

others. For Benjamin had been the baby of the home when Joseph had gone away, and Joseph loved him.

Then Joseph asked his brothers: "Is your father still well, your father who lives out in the desert?"

And they said: "Our father is well." So Joseph asked more about his father, and about the home in the desert, and they told him. But they never once guessed that it was Joseph.

At last Joseph sent them away with the grain they had come to buy. But first he said to his chief servant: "Put all the money back in the sacks of grain, and put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest."

When the brothers had gone a little way from the city, they looked around, and there were soldiers coming after them. The soldiers came up and said: "What have you done? The great ruler was kind to you and gave you a feast, and you have stolen his silver cup. You are thieves."

"We have not taken any cup," said the brothers. "You shall look through our sacks and if you find it, we will all be your slaves and the man who stole the cup shall die."

"No," said the soldiers. "Only the one who took the cup shall stay as a slave. The rest may go home to their father."

The soldiers looked through all the sacks and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. So they all went back to Joseph. And Joseph said: "Your youngest brother is a thief. He has stolen my silver cup and he shall stay in Egypt and be my slave. But the rest of you can take your grain and go home to the desert." Joseph wanted to see whether the ten brothers would be kinder to Benjamin than they had been to him, or whether they were still cruel.

Then one of the brothers stood up and spoke: "O great ruler," he said, "our old father is waiting for us

in the desert. And this is his youngest son, the son he loves best of all. And if we go back to him now he will ask us, 'Where is Benjamin?' If we tell him that Benjamin is a slave in Egypt, our father will die, for he is an old man and loves Benjamin more than his life. Let Benjamin go free and return to our father and I will stay here in his place and be your slave."

When Joseph heard this and saw how they loved their youngest brother, he called aloud to all the soldiers and the Egyptians to go out of the room, and he wept and said to his brothers: "I am Joseph."

They could hardly believe what he was saying, but he said again: "I am Joseph, your brother whom you sold as a slave to Egypt. But God had his own plans for me, and because I came to Egypt as a slave, I have become a great ruler, and have saved the Egyptian people from the famine.



JOSEPH GREETING BENJAMIN

"Now go back to the desert for my father Jacob and bring him with you down to Egypt, for here I

am a great ruler and I have plenty for all of you during all the years of famine that are still coming."

The brothers went back to the desert and brought Jacob down to Egypt. They told him what had happened to Joseph, and how he had not been killed by the wild animals but was a great ruler in Egypt. Jacob was so happy to hear the good news of his son that he forgave all the wicked brothers for what they had done so many years before.

So they all came to dwell in the land of Egypt. Joseph gave them plenty of land for their sheep and plenty of land for grain, and took care of them all through the years of famine. So Joseph's dream had come true and he had become a great ruler, and was king over his brothers. And they all lived happily in Egypt for the rest of their lives.

QUESTIONS

Who was Benjamin?

What did the brothers want to do when the great famine came?

Who was the great ruler in Egypt that the brothers had to go to see?

What did Joseph want to find out before he told them who he was?

Whom did he send them home to get?

What did they do when they needed more food?

What did Joseph do when he saw them?

How did he try them to see if they loved Benjamin?

What did the brothers do when Joseph said that Benjamin had to stay?

What did Joseph do then?

THE TWELFTH STORY

THE BOY WHO WAS HID IN A BASKET



ANY, many years ago there was a wicked king who tried to kill baby boys. This story tells how one baby was hidden away by the king's own daughter, till he grew up to be a strong man. He became a very great man too. He fought the king him-

self and made him do just what he told him to do.

You know all about the beautiful green land of Egypt, do you not, where Joseph went to live with his brothers? Well, the years went by, till Joseph died and his brothers died, and all their children died. But their great-great-grandchildren were living, and there were hundreds and hundreds of them. They all lived together in the same part of Egypt, and they called themselves the Children of Israel. Israel was another name for Jacob.

The Children of Israel loved each other and took care of each other and they were all like one big family. There were hundreds and hundreds of them, and after a while there were thousands and thousands of them. They were strong and they worked hard, and they grew very rich.

For a long time the Children of Israel lived very

happily in the land of Egypt, for the king was kind to them and gave them plenty of land. He remembered how Joseph had kept the people from starving for seven long years. But after a time the good old king died, and the next king died and the next one, and at last there was a king who did not know anything about Joseph. He hated the Children of Israel.

This bad king looked over the land of Egypt, and said: "These Children of Israel are too strong and they have too much land. By and by some other king will come to fight us, and if the Children of Israel are on his side he will surely beat us. It is not good for us to let the Children of Israel grow so strong and rich."

He wondered what he could do to keep the Children of Israel from being so strong. At last he said: "I know what I can do. I will make them be my slaves. I will build two great cities with stone walls all around them. I will make the Children of Israel do all the work, and I will not give them enough to eat, and after a while they will die."

The king said to his soldiers: "Build me two great cities with stone walls and make the Children of Israel do all the work, and be very mean and cruel to them so that they will die."

So the soldiers went to the Children of Israel and took all their strong men and marched them away to the two big cities the wicked king wanted to build. They made them work all day, and sometimes they made them work all night. And when the Children of Israel had worked very hard, and had built a good wall, the soldiers would say to them: "You did not do

it right. You are bad servants." Then the soldiers would whip them with long whips, so that sometimes the Children of Israel fell down on the ground because they were beaten so hard.

But the Children of Israel were very strong, and no matter what the soldiers did to them, they got up the next morning as strong as ever. No matter how hungry they were and no matter how little food the king let them have, every year they had more and more children, till the wicked old king began to be afraid of them. For he said: "No matter what I do to them, these Children of Israel get stronger and every year there are more of them. Some day they will fight against me and then what will happen?"

Now of course you know the best thing for the king to do. He could have been kind to the Children of Israel, and made them his friends, and then they would never have wanted to fight him. But the king was very wicked and stupid and he never once thought of that. He only wondered how to keep the Children of Israel from growing so strong.

So he said to himself: "I know what I can do. The trouble with the Children of Israel is there are so many of them. I will kill all the baby boys that are born to the children of Israel. The girls can live, for they can never do any fighting, but I will kill all the boys."

The wicked king said that all the baby boys who were born to the Children of Israel must be killed. When there was a baby girl they let it live, but they threw all the baby boys into the river, where the big crocodiles ate them up.

Just about this time there was a baby boy born in one of the families of the Children of Israel. He was a beautiful boy, and when his mother looked at him she said: "It would be a dreadful thing to throw such a fine-looking boy into the river for the crocodiles. I will not tell anyone that I have a baby."

So for three whole months she kept the baby hidden in the house. She never took him out in the fresh air, and she never told anyone what a beautiful baby boy she had. She just kept still all the time, so that the baby would not be thrown into the river.

Her house was close to the river and every morning she looked out and saw the crocodiles and she said: "I must keep my baby away from them today." And every evening she thanked God for helping her save her baby.

But after three months the baby was too big to hide. He began to cry when he was shut up inside the house. His mother was very much afraid that someone would hear him cry and that the wicked king would send and kill him.

So she said: "I know what I can do. I will put him in a basket, and fix the sides of the basket so tight that no water can get in. Then I will fasten it in the bushes on the edge of the river. The basket will be so big that the crocodiles can not swallow it, and the baby will be so far away that no one can hear him when he cries."

She got a big basket and fastened it so that the water could not get in, and covered it all over with green stuff so that no one could see the baby, and hid it in the bushes on the river. Then she called her little



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THE FINDING OF MOSES.

girl Miriam and said to her: "Watch near the river and be sure that nothing happens to your baby brother."

You see if the mother stayed down near the river all day long to watch the baby, every one would wonder what she was doing, but her little girl Miriam could play there and no one would ask any questions. So Miriam went down to play near the river and watched her baby brother.

After a while the princess of the whole land came down to the river to bathe. She was the daughter of the wicked king, but she was not wicked like her father. She was a very good princess. She was beautiful and kind-hearted and she was very sorry for the poor Children of Israel when she saw how her father treated them.

While she was bathing in the river she looked among the bushes and saw a strange looking basket. Then she said to her servant-maid: "Go and get the basket and let me see what is in it. It is a strange-looking basket to be floating around in the river in this way."

The servant maid went and got the basket and the beautiful princess took off the green leaves that covered the top and looked in. And what did she see? A baby. Yes, a little baby boy about three months old. And as soon as she saw the baby, the baby began to cry.

Then the princess said to herself: "If I tell my father about this baby, he will kill it, for it must be one of the babies born to the Children of Israel. This is what I will do. I will take the child for my own

child, and will let him live in the palace with me, and no one will know that he is not my very own baby."

All this time the little girl Miriam was looking to see what would happen to her baby brother. When she saw that the princess was a kind-hearted princess,



THE BABY MOSES RESTORED TO HIS MOTHER.

and was going to take care of the baby, she came near and said: "O great and beautiful princess, how will you take care of a baby? Shall I get you a woman for nurse, to take care of the baby for you?"

Then the princess said: "Go and get me a nurse and I will pay her good wages if she will take care of the baby. And no one shall hurt the baby, for it shall be my very own."

So Miriam went and called her mother and said: "The princess herself has found the baby and she is going to take it for her own. But she wants a nurse." So the mother went to the princess and said she would be nurse and take care of the baby.

The princess said: "Take good care of him and I will pay you for it. And no one shall hurt him, for he belongs to me. And when he is older he shall live in the king's palace with me, and learn all the things that the king's sons learn.

The baby's own mother then took the baby back and cared for it, and the princess paid her for taking care of her own child. And the princess said: "Call him Moses." So they called him Moses. He was a strong boy and when he grew up he went to live in the king's palace and learned all the things that the king's sons learned. So the wicked old king himself had to help the Children of Israel without knowing it.

QUESTIONS

Who were the Children of Israel?

Where did the Children of Israel live for a long time?

What kind of a king was there after a while?

What did he do to keep the Children of Israel from being strong?

Why could he not hurt the Children of Israel?

What law did he make about the boy babies?

What did one mother do to save her baby?

Who found the baby in the water?

What did she do with him?

What did the baby's sister say to the princess?

THE THIRTEENTH STORY

THE YOUNG MAN WHO DELIVERED HIS PEOPLE



YOU have heard of the wicked king who tried to kill all the Children of Israel, and how he made them slaves and worked them very hard, so that they would die. And you remember how a baby was born named Moses, and how the princess saved him from being killed and took care of him and let him live in the king's own palace.

Well, Moses grew and grew, and he learned all the things that a king's son learns. He learned how to fight and how to use swords and spears. He was a strong boy and he could fight well. He was taught how to hunt with the bow and arrow. And he learned how to be captain of a big army.

Another thing he was taught also. He learned all about making laws, and ruling a great many people. That is one of the things that a king's son learns, so that he can know how to be king some day. Moses learned all these things, and years afterwards he showed that he knew how to rule and make laws, for he became a great captain and a leader for the Children of Israel.

All this time the Children of Israel were growing stronger and stronger. Every year there were more of them. The king tried to kill all the boy babies, but he could not do it, for there were so many that while he was killing some the others grew up. And many of the mothers hid their babies and this made it harder for the king to kill them. So no matter how hard the king tried the Children of Israel grew stronger.

But the stronger they grew, the more cruel the wicked king was. He took the men away from their families, so that the families would starve. And he made the men work very hard. If they did their work badly they would be whipped and sometimes killed. Anyone could kill them who wanted to, and the king would not punish him.

Nothing seemed to make any difference. The worse the king treated them, the stronger they grew and the more there were of them. So the wicked king said: "I do not see what is the matter with these Children of Israel. I cannot work them to death and I cannot starve them to death. I do not know what to do."

Now why do you suppose it was that the wicked king could not hurt the Children of Israel? It was because the Children of Israel loved each other and were kind to each other, just like one big family. When the king would take one man away from his children to work in his big stone cities, all the other men would take care of the family, so that the children would not have to go hungry. And when one of the men was sick and could not do his work, the other men would do it for him, so that he would not be pun-

ished. Always they helped each other and stood up for each other, and so the king could not keep them from growing stronger.

And all this time Moses lived in the palace. He had beautiful clothes to wear, and the very best food to eat, for nobody knew that he was one of the Children of Israel himself. If Moses had been a selfish man, he could have stayed in the king's palace all his life, and had a good time. He would never have had to bother about the rest of the Children of Israel.

But Moses was not a selfish man. When he was only a boy he used to go home sometimes to visit his real mother, and then he would see how the Children of Israel were treated. He would put his teeth tight together and say: "If I were only a man, I would not let them do that."

Then Moses saw the wicked king, and he knew how cruel and selfish and wicked he was, and Moses said: "When I am a man I will not let him do that. I will punish the king for the way he treats the Children of Israel."

But all this time the king never knew what Moses was thinking. If he had known it, what do you suppose he would have done to him? He would have killed him, would he not?

After a while Moses grew to be a young man, very strong and a good fighter. He was not afraid of anyone. One day he said to himself: "I will go to these great stone cities that the king is building and see how the Children of Israel are getting on."

So Moses went out to visit the big stone cities. He looked around and he saw how hard the Children of

Israel had to work. And while he was looking on, what do you suppose happened?

One of the king's men took a big stick and hit one of the Children of Israel with it. He struck him hard on the head so that it nearly knocked him down. But the poor man who was hit did not dare do anything. He just got up again and went on with his work. That was the way everybody was allowed to treat the Children of Israel.

Moses was very angry. He said: "If you do not dare fight for yourself I will fight for you." So Moses looked this way, and he looked that way, and he saw that there was no one to see him. Then he lifted the heavy stick and knocked the king's man on the head with it and killed him.

Afterwards Moses said: "What shall I do with the body of this man I have killed? For if anyone finds it I shall be punished."

So he dug a deep hole in the ground and hid the body of the dead man in the hole. Then he went away and thought no one had seen him.

But the very next day Moses went out again. He went to the place where the Children of Israel were working. And when he got there he found two of the Children of Israel fighting with each other.

Then Moses was very sorry. He knew that the only reason the Children of Israel were so strong was because they had loved each other and taken care of each other. He said to himself: "If we are going to begin fighting ourselves, I do not know what will become of us. Surely the wicked king will have his wish, and we shall all become weaker and weaker

Moses went up to the men who were fighting. He asked them what the trouble was. Then one of them said: "This fellow hit me and I was not doing anything." Then Moses asked the other one if that was true, and he found that it was.

So Moses said to the man who had begun the fighting: "Why did you hit this other man? It is wrong for us to fight one another."

But the man was very angry, and said to Moses: "Who made you a judge over us? What right have you to tell us what to do? Do you think you can kill me as you killed the king's man yesterday?"

When Moses heard that he was afraid. "I did not know that anyone saw me," he said. "If the king finds out what I have done, he will kill me."

So Moses left all the rich clothes and the good food that he had in the king's palace and went away quickly out of the land. He did not have time to take camels and horses with him. He had to go away quickly for fear the king would kill him. But he went to the desert country and sat down by a well.

While he was sitting there seven maidens came to draw water for their sheep. But as soon as they had drawn enough water and had poured it into a trough, some selfish shepherds came along and drove them all away, and took the water for their own sheep. But Moses stood up and helped the seven sisters water their sheep.

Then they said to him: "Are you a stranger?"

Moses said: "I am a stranger from the land of Egypt, and I have no place to go."

The sisters said: "Come home with us." So Moses

went home with them and stayed with them for many years.

But all this time Moses never forgot the Children of Israel in the land of Egypt. He remembered how hard they had to work and how cruel the king was. He said to himself: "Some day when I am older I will go back and take the Children of Israel away from the wicked king and we will all go back to our own country where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob lived before Joseph and his brothers went down to Egypt.

This was what Moses did years and years afterward. He went back to Egypt and made the wicked king let the Children of Israel go. He took them back through the desert country till they came to their own land. And the wicked king was drowned in the middle of the sea.

QUESTIONS

Where did Moses grow up?

What did he learn to do?

Did Moses forget his own people?

What did he make up his mind to do when he was a man?

Why did Moses go to the big, stone city?

What did he see there?

Why did he kill the king's man?

How did Moses find out that people knew what he had done?

Where did Moses go?

With whom did he stay?

What was Moses going to do after a long time?

THE FOURTEENTH STORY

THE DEATH OF THE OLDEST SONS



EVERYONE who refuses to do right is certain to be punished sometime and somehow. This is the story about a king who was so wicked that all of the oldest boys in the whole land had to be killed before he would do what he should. His own boy died and his friends' boys died, and all the oldest boys in all the families of the whole land died, all in one night.

You remember the story of Moses and the wicked king. Moses went away into the desert for years and years because he was afraid the wicked king would kill him. But after a while he heard that this wicked king was dead, so he went back to the land of Egypt. Nobody knew him any more, for he had been gone so many years. His mother was dead, and the beautiful princess who had taken care of him was dead. But her brother was living and he was king now. And he was just as wicked as his father had been.

When Moses was living in the desert, God came to him and said: "The Children of Israel are in great trouble in the land of Egypt. Go down and help them." Then Moses left the desert country and went

down to Egypt. He said to himself: "The old king is dead and perhaps the new king will listen to me when I go to him and ask him to set the Children of Israel free from their hard work."



PHARAOH AT THE DEATH BED OF HIS SON.

Moses went straight to the king's palace and asked to see the king. And he said: "O King, God has sent me to tell you this. You must let the Children of Israel go back to the desert country where they can work for themselves and not for you."

Then the wicked king laughed and said: "I never saw God and why should I do what He says? I will not let the Children of Israel go."

And the king said worse things to Moses. He said: "Why are you coming around and making the people hate their work? I will make you work also. And I will give the Children of Israel harder tasks to do, so that they will not have time to think about the desert country."

So the wicked king made the Children of Israel work harder than ever and he said to his soldiers: "You shall not give bricks to the Children of Israel any more, nor any of the straw for making bricks. Make them get their own bricks. But make them do just as much work as they did before."

And Moses prayed to God and said: "I went to the king as you told me, but see what has happened. Everything is worse than it was before." But God answered and said: "I will help you and bring the Children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. For they are My people and I will take care of them."

So Moses went back to the king and said: "Let the people go."

And the wicked king answered: "I will not let them go."

But Moses said: "If you do not let them go, the waters of the great river shall be turned into blood. And all the fish in the water shall die."

The king said: "You could never do that."

So Moses took a rod that he had. Do you know what a rod is? It is a long smooth stick. Moses took his rod and waved it over the river and struck the

river with it, and all the water was turned into blood.

Then the wicked king sent for Moses and said: "Only turn the river back to water again and I will let the people go." So Moses did as the king asked. But as soon as the water was good again, the wicked king changed his mind, and he said: "I will not let the people go."

Moses said: "Unless you let the people go, I will bring frogs on the land, and they will come into your house and into your bed and onto your table, and everywhere you look there will be frogs."

But the king laughed and said: "You could never do that."

So Moses lifted up his rod and frogs came out of the river. They hopped into the king's palace, and they hopped into the king's bed-room, and they hopped right into the wicked king's bed. Then the wicked king called for Moses and said: "Take the frogs away and I will let the people go." So Moses took the frogs away, but the wicked king changed his mind as soon as the frogs were gone, and he would not let the people go.

Then Moses stretched out his rod and all the dust on the earth turned to lice. They crawled all over the people and all over the animals, and they crawled all over the king. And the king said: "Take the lice away." So Moses took them away. And still the wicked king would not let the people go.

Moses stretched out his rod again and flies came up out of the water. Flies and flies and flies, till the air was all black with them. They flew into the king's house, and into the king's room and they buzzed all

around the king. And the king said: "Take these flies away and I will let the Children of Israel go." So Moses took the flies away. But as soon as he saw that the flies were gone, the wicked king changed his mind, and he would not let the people go.

Moses raised his rod again and all the cows in the land of Egypt fell sick and died. Only the cows that belonged to the Children of Israel were not sick. But the wicked king's heart was very hard and he said: "Still I will not let the people go."

Then Moses took a handful of ashes and threw it into the air. It flew all over the land of Egypt, and every man that it touched had big sores. And the wicked king himself had big sores, so that he ached all over. Then he called for Moses and said: "Take these sores off and I will let the Children of Israel go." So Moses took the sores off. But as soon as the wicked king felt well again he changed his mind and said: "Still I will not let the Children of Israel go."

So Moses did three more dreadful things. He raised his rod and a terrible hail-storm came. Big pieces of ice fell down from the sky. They broke all the trees in the fields and all the plants. And the whole land was icy. And still the wicked king would not let the Children of Israel go.

After this Moses stretched his hand out over the land, and locusts came. They flew through the air and covered all the ground, so that the air and the ground looked black. They ate up all the green leaves that had not been killed by the hail. And still the wicked king would not consent to let the Children of Israel go.

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the land of Egypt, and it grew dark in the middle of the day. The sun went out and there was not any moon.

The wicked king said to Moses: "If you come near me again I will have you killed and that will be an end of these dreadful things."

And Moses said: "I will never come to you again. But one thing more will happen. If you do not let the Children of Israel go, tonight all the oldest boys in the whole land of Egypt will die. For all the people of Egypt have been cruel to the Children of Israel. So the oldest boy in every family shall die tonight, if you do not let the Children of Israel go."

That was a terrible thing to say, was it not? But the wicked king laughed and said: "You could never do that. My palace is strong and I have plenty of servants. They will keep you out. And my oldest boy sleeps inside the palace where the soldiers can take care of him. You could never hurt him." So Moses went out from the king.

But Moses went to the Children of Israel and said: "Get all your silver and all your gold and all your cows and sheep and be ready to go tonight out of the land of Egypt. For before tomorrow morning the wicked king will let us go."

So the Children of Israel made a great feast. They killed their fattest sheep and ate them, and they got all the other sheep and cows together, so that they could drive them away quickly. Then they packed their gold and silver and were ready to start.

A little before midnight the wicked king's wife sent to him and she said: "Our oldest boy is very

sick." Then the wicked king was afraid, but he said: "Surely it is not anything very bad. He will be all right in the morning."



THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL LEAVING EGYPT.

But a little while later his wife called to him and she said: "Our boy is worse. Send for Moses and ask him to take away the sickness."

The wicked king arose up to send for Moses, but he thought: "The boy will be all right in the morning

and then Moses will laugh at me." So he went to bed again.

At midnight there was a great cry in the house, and the king's wife came in to him and said: "The boy is dead; the boy is dead. It is you who have killed him, because you would not let the Children of Israel go."

Then the wicked king was very much afraid. And he rose up in the middle of the night, and went out of his palace. And all through the land of Egypt there was a great cry. For there was not a house in all the land where there was not one dead.

The king hastened to send to Moses while it was still night and said: "Take the Children of Israel and go out of the land of Egypt into the desert. And leave me alone, for my son is dead, and you are too strong for me."

So Moses and the Children of Israel took their sheep and their cows and all the gold and silver they had packed, and went quickly by night out of the land of Egypt. They walked very fast till they crossed the Red Sea and came to the desert country.

But the very next day the wicked king went after them with his soldiers. He thought of all the work he had made them do, and he was sorry now that he had let them go. So he went with his soldiers to bring them back again.

He came to the Red Sea where the Children of Israel had crossed, and he drove right in after them. But Moses stood on the other shore and raised his rod, and the water came up higher and higher and rolled right over the wicked king and his soldiers. And that was the end of the wicked king.

QUESTIONS

Why did Moses go to the desert?

Why did he come back?

What did he say to the king?

Did the king make the Children of Israel work harder than ever?

What did Moses say God would do to the wicked king?

What were some of the dreadful things that happened?

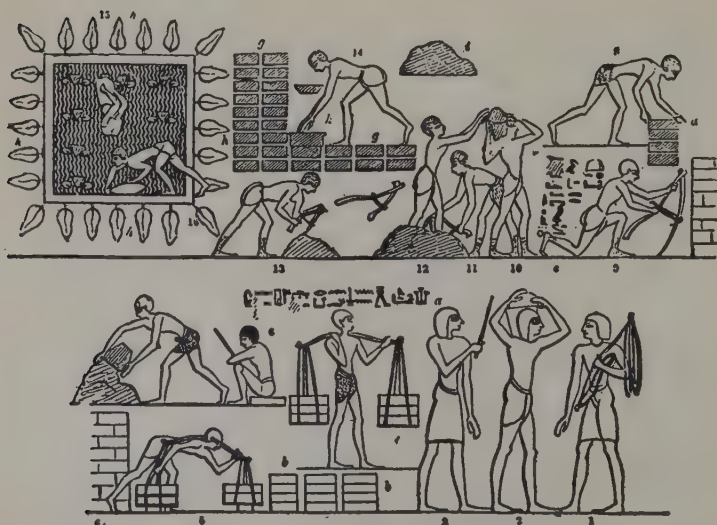
What did the king say he would do?

What did he do after Moses had taken away the dreadful things?

What was the last thing that happened?

What did the king do then?

What happened to the wicked king?



THE FIFTEENTH STORY

TWO BRAVE YOUNG MEN



MOSES was a man of courage, and he gathered brave men about him. This is a story about two young men who were brave when their friends were cowards. All of the people they knew were afraid to fight, but these two young men were not afraid.

After the wicked king in Egypt was dead and Moses took the Children of Israel across the sea to the desert country, they had no place to go. All of the land was dry and hard, and only once in a long time did they find any wells. When they found a well with green grass around it, they stopped for a while and then went on again.

They had many very exciting times while they were going through the desert country. Sometimes there were men whom they had to fight. They would come to a green place where there was some grass and water, but there would be some other people there before them. The Children of Israel wanted some of the grass. But the other people would say: "No, this all belongs to us. We will not let you come near us."

Then they would have a battle to decide which could

have the water and grass for their sheep to eat. The Children of Israel killed all the other people and took their grass. But even then there was not enough to last very long.

And one time when they were very thirsty and had gone for a long way without finding any water, the people said to Moses: "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? We were poor people in Egypt, and we had to work hard, but we had water to drink. But here in the desert there is no water."

So Moses took his wonderful rod and struck a hard rock with it, and a beautiful stream of water came out of the rock. There was enough for all the men and the women and the children to drink, and then there was some left over for the sheep and cows.

But all of the wonderful things that happened to the Children of Israel in the desert you will hear sometime in another story. This story is about what happened after they got through the desert and came into a lovely green country. Only they did not stay in the lovely green country, but went back into the dry, dusty desert again. That was a strange thing for them to do, was it not? But it was because they were afraid. They were cowards. And this is how it happened.

After the Children of Israel had gone for a long, long way through the desert, they came to a beautiful land. There was green grass and good ground where they could raise vegetables. A beautiful river ran through the land. It was called the river Jordan. Every one had plenty of water to drink and to wash in and to water the vegetables and wheat.

The Children of Israel were very happy when they saw this land. They stopped beside the river and put up their tents, and they said: "How glad we are that we came up from the land of Egypt. Here we can be a free people, without any wicked king, and we will always have plenty to eat and drink."

But there were some people already living in the beautiful country. The people who were already there did not want the Children of Israel to take away their beautiful land. They sent men to the Children of Israel to say: "You cannot come into our land. It belongs to us."

So the Children of Israel sat down by the side of the river and wondered what they would do. Then Moses said: "I will choose twelve men and send them over to this lovely green country. They must not let anyone know that they belong to the Children of Israel; for if anyone knew it they would be killed. They must go all through the land, from north to south and from east to west, and see what the land is like and what the people are like, and what chance we would have if we should fight them."

So Moses chose twelve men and sent them into the lovely land to go all through it from the east to the west and from the north to the south. Two of the men were young men; their names were Joshua and Caleb. They were strong, brave, young men and they were very good fighters.

The twelve men went away for forty days. They went north and north through the beautiful green country, and then they went east through the beautiful green country, and then they went west through the

beautiful green country, and then they went back south again. And in one of the places where they went they cut down a bunch of grapes so big that two men had to carry it between them on a long pole. The land was so good that there were all kinds of grapes and figs and everything else that grows.

But the people that lived in the land were very strong, and knew how to fight. They were tall like giants, and they had built great cities with stone walls around them. And ten of the twelve men were afraid. The only two who were not afraid were Joshua and Caleb.

After forty days the twelve men came back to the Children of Israel. Then Moses called all the people together to hear what the twelve men had to say. The men showed the big bunch of grapes they had brought; they showed the figs and the grain and the vegetables.

The twelve men said: "We came to the land to which you sent us. It is a very beautiful land, flowing with milk and honey, and this is the kind of fruit that grows there." Then all the Children of Israel shouted for joy because the land was so beautiful and they all wanted to go there.

But the men said: "The people who live in the land are very strong. They are as tall as giants, and they fight bravely. They have great cities with stone walls, and they have heavy swords and spears. We shall never be able to drive out the fierce giants that live there."

Then all the Children of Israel lifted up their voice and wept. They cried: "We shall never be able to go

into this beautiful land. We wish we had stayed in Egypt."

And Caleb and Joshua stilled the people before Moses and said: "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

But the other ten men who had gone through the land said: "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. We saw men as tall as giants. And when they looked at us we felt like grasshoppers."

The Children of Israel wept again, and they said: "We wish we had stayed in Egypt, or else that we had died in the desert. Why does God lead us up into this land, where our wives and children will be killed by the giants? Our wives and our little ones will be killed. We will go back to Egypt."

Then they all turned to Moses and said: "We will choose another captain who will take us back to Egypt. We will not follow you any more."

But Joshua stood up and said: "The land we went through from the north to the south is a very good country. If God is pleased with us, He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which floweth with milk and honey. Be not afraid of the people, for if God is on our side and leads us they will not be able to fight us. The land is a good land, and God is with us. Why are you all afraid?"

The people were very angry at this and threw stones at Joshua and Caleb.

Then all of a sudden a bright light shone in the tent where all the people were, and out of the light came the voice of God speaking to Moses. And God

said: "How long will this people despise me? How long will they not believe in me? Because all these men have seen the wonderful things I have done for them, and still have been afraid, and have not believed in me, this is what I will do. None of these men who are afraid shall ever see the beautiful green country. They shall all die in the desert.

"But my servants Caleb and Joshua, because they have another spirit in them, and have followed Me fully, they shall go into the land and it shall belong to them and their children. But all the rest of the Children of Israel, all who are over twenty years old, shall wander in the desert until they die. For forty long years shall they wander till their dead bodies drop in the desert, and then their children shall go up into the beautiful country with Joshua and Caleb."

That was the way it happened. All the ten men who went through the land and were afraid, were killed by a dreadful sickness. And the rest of the Children of Israel turned and went back through the desert. They wandered here and there in the desert, north and south and east and west, and they wandered for forty years.

But after forty years were over, and all the people who had been afraid were dead, and only their children were living, the Children of Israel went back to the beautiful country. Joshua and Caleb took them back. For Joshua and Caleb were grown to be strong men who knew how to fight.

They led the Children of Israel through the lovely green land and they killed the giants and took the beautiful country for themselves. This is what hap-

pened because they were not afraid like the other ten men.

QUESTIONS

Where did the Children of Israel go when they left Egypt?

What did they do when the people they met would not let them take the grass for their cows and sheep?

What did Moses do when they were thirsty?

What kind of a land did they reach after a while?

Were there people in this land already?

What did Moses send twelve men to do?

What did the twelve men say about the land?

What did they say about the men who lived there?

What did the Children of Israel do?

What did Joshua and Caleb say?

What happened to the Children of Israel because they were afraid?

What happened to Joshua and Caleb because they were brave?

Do you like to hear about brave men?

Will you try to have courage to do right?

Does it take courage to stand for the right when others do wrong?



THE SIXTEENTH STORY

JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER



GIRLS were not always happy in olden times; but this is the story of a father who had a daughter and loved her very dearly.

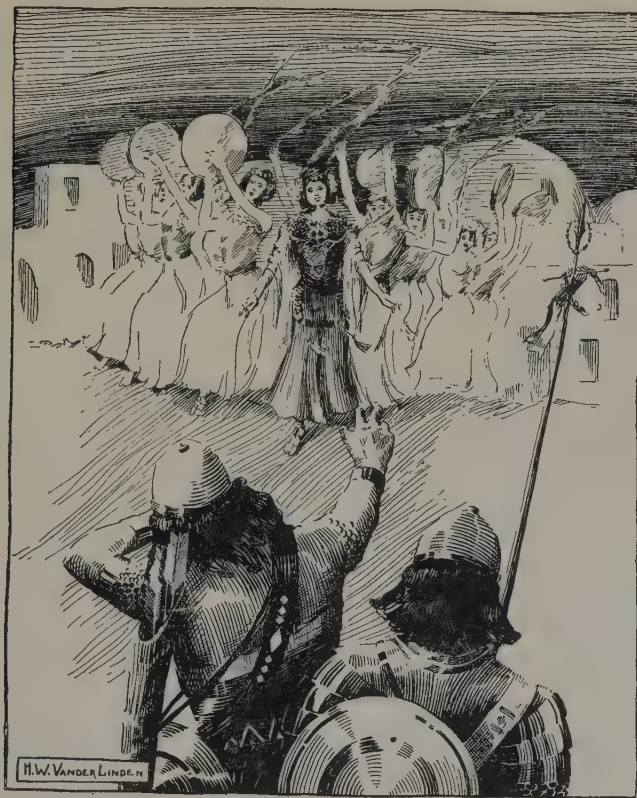
Once upon a time, thousands of years ago, there was a mighty man named Jephthah. He was strong and brave and he was a great fighter. Jephthah was one of the Children of Israel, and he lived in the beautiful green land for which the Children of Israel had fought years before.

You remember the two brave young men who went through the beautiful country and brought back word about it. And you remember how the Children of Israel were not brave, and how they wandered for forty years in the desert till all of the old people were dead and only the ones who had been children were left. After forty years the Children of Israel went up with Joshua and Caleb and fought the men that lived in the lovely country. They drove them out and took the land for themselves.

So the Children of Israel lived in this beautiful green land. But the men who had been driven out went into the desert. And sometimes they came back

to fight the Children of Israel. They were always fighting the Children of Israel to get the land back.

Some of these people were called the Children of Ammon, and that was because ever and ever so many



JEPHTHAH'S RETURN FROM THE BATTLE.

years ago, their great-great-great-ever-so-many-great-grandfather's name was Ammon. The Children of Ammon used to come with swords and spears and try to drive the Children of Israel away again.

Jephthah was a great and mighty man. He used to fight with the Children of Ammon. But because he was so brave, some of the rest of the people grew jealous of him. They said: "Jephthah will try to be chief over us. Let us drive him away into the desert."

So they went to Jephthah and said: "Take your wife and your daughter and go into the desert. For we do not want you in our beautiful green land." And though Jephthah was so strong and so brave, he was only one man, and all the Children of Israel were against him. So he took his wife and his little girl and went into the desert country to live.

Jephthah's little girl grew up in the desert country. She grew up to be strong and brave. She liked to walk in the desert and on the mountains, and watch the beautiful white clouds in the sky. And she liked to lie out on the ground at night and watch the large white stars. And best of all she loved to hear stories about the wars her father had fought in. For Jephthah was a mighty man of war.

But it came to pass after a while that the Children of Ammon made war against the Children of Israel. And when the Children of Israel saw what a very hard time they were going to have, they sent to get Jephthah back again. They knew that he was a strong man and a good fighter, and they were afraid that they would be beaten if he did not help them. So they sent to Jephthah and said: "Come and be our chief, and lead us that we may fight with the Children of Ammon."

Jephthah said: "Did you not hate me, and drive me forth from my father's house? And why are you now come to me when you are in so much trouble?"

They replied: "We have come to ask you to be our chief, and to help us fight the Children of Ammon."

Then Jephthah answered them: "If I go with you to fight the Children of Ammon, and if we win, when we come back again will you keep me as your head?" Then the people said: "God hears what we are saying. We will promise to make you our head."

Jephthah said good-bye to his wife and his daughter, and went out to fight with the Children of Ammon. First he sent a messenger to the king of the Children of Ammon saying: "What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come unto me to fight against my land?"

The king sent back word: "Because the Children of Israel took away our land when they came up out of Egypt, and we want our land back again."

Then Jephthah said: "The land we took was not yours. It belongs to God and God shall decide this day who is to have it. We have not taken all the land, but we left enough for you. But if you wish to drive us out of what we have taken, you will have to fight."

So the king of the Children of Ammon came out with all his people, with swords and spears and bows and arrows, and all day long he fought with Jephthah and the Children of Israel.

Then Jephthah made a promise to God and said: "If thou wilt give the Children of Ammon to us to-day, then when I go home again to my house, whatever first comes out to meet me shall belong to God, and I will kill it on the altar."

You see, in those days people had very strange ideas about God. They believed that God was pleased when they gave Him presents. They did not know that the thing God wanted was a loving heart and people who would obey Him and do what He told them to do. They thought that God wanted them to take their sheep and their cows and kill them on the big stone altar for God.

So Jephthah promised that if God would help him win the fight, he would give God whatever came out to meet him first when he went back home.

The Children of Israel began to fight harder and harder. They shot their bows and arrows very straight. And the Children of Ammon turned and began to run away. So the Children of Israel ran after them and killed them.

They went through twenty cities. In every one of them the Children of Ammon ran away and the Children of Israel killed them. So all the Children of Ammon were driven away, far, far out into the desert.

Then Jephthah turned around and went home again. He remembered his promise to God, and he wondered what kind of an animal he would see first when he got home. Would there be one of his sheep eating the grass by the road, or would there be one of the goats?

All the people of Israel were very glad when Jephthah conquered the Children of Ammon. They made a great procession to take Jephthah home. They waved banners and flags and shouted very loud. The people in the town where Jephthah lived had a wonderful surprise all ready for him.

You remember, do you, that Jephthah had to say good-bye to his daughter when he went away to fight? Jephthah loved his daughter very much. She was his only child. She was very glad because her father was such a strong man and such a good fighter, and because he had beaten all the Children of Ammon. So she got all the girls in the town together to have a great procession for Jephthah's home-coming.

So when Jephthah came back the first thing he saw was his own daughter coming out to meet him with singing and dancing, and all the other maidens of the town with her. They were all of them singing and dancing because they were so glad to see Jephthah home again.

When Jephthah saw his daughter he cried out and tore his clothes, and he said: "Alas, my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth to God and I cannot go back."

Then his daughter said to him: "What have I done, that I should make you so sad? I thought it would please you to see us."

But Jephthah answered: "I gave my promise to God that I would kill on His altar whatever first met me from my house when I came home."

Jephthah's daughter was a brave girl. She said to her father: "You have given your promise to God and you cannot go back. For God has punished all your enemies and helped you drive the Children of Ammon into the desert."

Then Jephthah said to her: "Have you no wish to ask me?"

His daughter said: "You must do as you promised. But if you are willing, let us wait for two months. Let me alone for two months and I will go up into the mountains with my friends, and there I will prepare myself for death."

So Jephthah said to her: "Go, my daughter." Then his daughter took her friends, the girls she knew best, and went with them alone to the mountains. She left behind her the beautiful gardens where the olives and the grapes and the figs grew; she left all the houses where the people lived whom she had always loved. She went up alone with her best friends to the mountains. And she stayed there for two whole months.

Sometimes the days would be bright and the white clouds would shine in the sun, and Jephthah's daughter would think how beautiful the world was and how soon she would have to leave it. And sometimes she would hear the wild beasts at night roaring a long way off, and then she would tremble for fear that they would kill her and eat her up before she could go back and let her father keep his promise. And sometimes she would look up and see the large white stars above the mountains, and then she would pray to God to make her brave to help her father.

After the two months were over, Jephthah's daughter came down from the mountains and went to her father. And she said: "I am ready, father. You must keep your promise."

So Jephthah took his daughter to the altar and killed her there. It was a dreadful thing for him to do, was it not? But years and years and years ago, people believed that that was what God wanted. That

was long before Jesus came to teach the people more about God.

Because Jephthah's daughter was so brave, she was buried with great honor, and every year the maidens in Israel went to her grave and held a great celebration, telling what a brave maiden she had been, and how she had died for her country because of her father's promise.

QUESTIONS

Who was Jephthah?

What made the Children of Israel send him away?

Where did Jephthah's little girl grow up?

What made the Children of Israel want Jephthah back again?

What did they promise Jephthah if he would help them fight?

What promise did Jephthah make to God if God would help him win the battle?

What happened when Jephthah came home?

What did Jephthah say when he saw his daughter?

What did his daughter ask for before she died?

Where did she go?

What did Jephthah do to his daughter when she came back?

Is that what God really wants us to do?

What does God want us to do for Him?

THE SEVENTEENTH STORY

THE GIRL WHO GLEANED IN THE FIELDS



REMEMBER the name of the place where Jesus was born. It was Bethlehem. There is another story about that same place, and it happened a long while ago, many hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus.

In the days before there was a king in Israel, there was a man named Elimelech, and a woman named Naomi, and they were married and had two sons. Then there arose a famine in the land, and Elimelech and Naomi and their sons did not have enough to eat. So they left their home, and went away to a far country, and took their two sons with them.

They lived in the strange land many years. For they found food and green grass and plenty of things to eat for themselves and their sheep. They lived there so long that Naomi's two sons grew up and married two of the beautiful maidens of the land. One of the maidens was named Orpah, and the other Ruth.

But after a while Naomi's sons died, and her husband died, and no one was left who really belonged to her any more. So she grew very lonely in the strange

country, and she said: "I will go back to the land of Israel, where my people live." For she knew that now the famine in the land of Israel was over.



RUTH AND NAOMI

So she went away from the strange land and started on the road to her own country. And the two maidens whom her sons had married went with her.

Naomi turned and said unto them: "Why do you come with me? All of your own people are here in

this land. Return each of you to her mother's house. God will be kind to you, for you have been kind to me and to my sons who are dead. God will give you husbands again. But I have no more sons. Go back to your own land and leave me alone."

But they both lifted up their voices and wept. And Orpah kissed Naomi good-bye, but Ruth stayed with her. So Naomi said: "Behold, thy sister is gone back to her people; return thou after thy sister."

Ruth loved Naomi and would not let her go back alone with no one to take care of her. So she said: "Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee. For where thou goest I will go. Where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, there will I die, and there will I be buried."

When Naomi saw that Ruth meant to go with her, she stopped telling her to go back. And both of them went together till they came to the land where the Children of Israel lived.

Then all the city came out to see them and they said: "Is this Naomi?" And Naomi answered: "God has been very cruel to me. I went out full and God has brought me home empty, for my sons and my husband are dead."

So Naomi and Ruth lived together in the land of Israel. They were both very poor, for they had no men to take care of them. And Naomi was old and not very strong. So Ruth said to Naomi: "I know what we can do. It is now the time when the men go into the field to get the grain. And the maidens of the land who have no one to take care of them are

allowed to go through the field after the men and pick up what is left and take it home to eat. I will go and pick up grain in the fields for us."

Naomi said to her: "Go, my daughter."

Ruth went out to pick up grain in the fields of the rich men who had plenty. She came to the field of a rich man named Boaz. Then Boaz came out and spoke to the reapers. The reapers were the men who cut down the grain and piled it up in big sheaves. Boaz said to them: "May God be with you."

The reapers answered: "May God bless you also."

Then Boaz said to the servant who was at the head of all his reapers: "Who is the maiden who is going after the men and picking up the grain that they have left?"

His servant said: "She is the maiden from the strange land who came back with Naomi and is taking care of her. She came to me this morning and said: 'Let me pick up the grain that the men leave behind.' So she has been here until now."

Boaz looked at Ruth and saw that she was young and very beautiful. And he thought, "It is a dreadful thing that she should have to go from field to field and pick up grain. Perhaps some of the rough young men will do her harm."

So Boaz came to Ruth and said: "Hear now, my daughter. Go not into any other field, but stay here in mine. Stay right behind the reapers and you shall have all that they leave. I have told the young men in my field that they shall not harm you. And when you are thirsty go to the water-pots and drink the water that the young men have drawn."

Ruth bowed before Boaz and said: "How is it that you are so good to me, and why do you do all this for me, for I am a stranger from a strange land?"

But Boaz answered: "I have heard how you take care of Naomi, and how you left your own people to go with her. You left your father and your mother and the land where you were born and you came to a strange country to be with her and take care of her. God will be kind to you, for you have been kind to Naomi."

Ruth was glad because of what Boaz had said and she did not feel alone and afraid any more.

But when meal-time came, Boaz said to Ruth: "Come here and take some of the bread that is brought for the reapers, and dip your piece into the sour wine that is here for my men." So Ruth sat beside the reapers. They gave her grain to eat and she ate all that she wanted until she was no longer hungry.

The more Boaz saw Ruth, the more he loved her, for he thought: "She is not only beautiful, but she is very kind-hearted, for she takes care of Naomi. And she is very brave to go out alone in the fields to pick up grain among the men."

So Boaz said to his young men: "Let her pick up grain among the best places, and do not hurt her. And every once in a while, you must drop some large bunches of grain behind you, so that she will find them."

So Ruth picked up grain in the field of Boaz till evening time. And because the reapers did what Boaz told them, Ruth found a great deal of grain, and was very happy because she had so much food to take back

to Naomi. And Boaz said to Ruth in the evening: "Come back to my field in the morning and stay here till all the grain is gone. Do not go to any other field."



BOAZ AND HIS REAPERS.

When Ruth got home Naomi was very glad to see her and said: "How did things go today, my daughter? Where did you find so much grain, and in what field did you work?"

Ruth told Naomi what had happened to her, and said, "The man who owns the field where I worked today is named Boaz."

When Naomi heard this she was very glad and said: "Let us thank God who has been so good to us. This man Boaz is a near relation of my husband who is dead."

Ruth answered: "Boaz said to me: 'Stay in my field as long as there is any grain, and go after my reapers till they have ended. Do not go into any other field.'" And Naomi saw that Boaz was pleased with Ruth, and she said: "You must do as he has told you. Do not let him see you in any other field. But stay with the maidens who pick up grain in his field until there is no more grain."

So Ruth stayed with the maidens in the field of Boaz, and every day she picked up grain, and every night she took it home to Naomi. And the more Boaz saw her the more he loved her.

But when the grain was nearly all gone, Naomi said to Ruth: "My daughter, shall I not wish for a resting place for thee, and a husband's home in which thou shalt be happy? And now is not Boaz a near relation of my husband's? Wash thyself therefore, and put on thy finest clothes, and wait tonight till all the other men have gone and Boaz lies down in the place where he keeps the grain. Wait till he has eaten and drunk and until he lies down, and then go in and lie at his feet. And when he says to you: 'Who are you,' you must answer what I shall tell you."

So Ruth said to Naomi: "I will do all that you say."

Then Ruth washed herself and put on her finest

clothes and went to the place where the grain was kept. And she waited till Boaz had eaten and drunk and till he had lain down. Then she went in and lay at his feet. And Boaz said: "Who art thou?"

Then Ruth answered: "I am Ruth, the daughter of Naomi, and thou art a near relation of those that are dead, the husband of Naomi, and her son, my husband."

Then Boaz knew what Naomi meant when she sent Ruth to say those words. For among the Children of Israel, when any man died and his wife had no children, some near relation of the man always married the man's wife and brought up children so that the man's family would not end. And Naomi meant that Boaz was a near relation and that he should marry Ruth. Boaz was very glad that Naomi wished this thing, for he knew how good and how beautiful Ruth was, and he loved her with all his heart.

So Boaz said to Ruth: "Go home now to Naomi and tell her that I will do as he has wished."

The next morning Boaz went down to the gate of the city and called together all the people, and he said: "The sons of Naomi are dead and they have left a little piece of land and Ruth, the maiden from a strange country. And I am a near relation. If there is any other man who is a near relation and who wishes to take the land and to marry Ruth, let him speak." And no one spoke.

Then Boaz said: "Let all the people know that I have taken Ruth, the maiden from a strange land, to be my wife, so that the family of the men who are dead shall not end."

So Boaz married Ruth and they lived happily for many years. They always took care of Naomi and gave her everything that she needed. And because Ruth had been so kind to Naomi, God sent Ruth a son who was to be a great man. And she was great-grandmother of David, the greatest king there ever was among all the Children of Israel.

QUESTIONS

Why did Naomi and her sons leave their home?

Did they stay a long time in the strange land?

What happened to the two sons?

Who went with Naomi when she started home again?

What did Ruth do to get food for Naomi and herself?

Whose field did she go to?

What did Boaz tell Ruth to do?

How long did Ruth stay in the field of Boaz?

What did Naomi tell Ruth to do when the harvest was over?

What did she say to Boaz when he found her at his feet?

What did Boaz do?

Where did Ruth and Boaz live?

What was the name of their great-grandson?

What else do you know about Bethlehem?

THE EIGHTEENTH STORY

THE MOTHER WHO PRAYED FOR A BABY



APPY is the mother who has a dear baby boy. This is the story of a woman who had no son, and was very unhappy about it; but you will be glad to know what happened afterward.

Thousands of years ago there was a man who had two wives. He was one of the Children of Israel and he lived in the hill-country, far from the city. His younger wife's name was Hannah. The older wife had many sons and many daughters, but Hannah had no children.

Because of this Hannah was very sad. She used to pray to God over and over again that He would give her a baby boy. For the other wife used to make fun of Hannah and say: "You are not as good as I, for God has sent me children and He has not sent them to you."

The man's name was Elkanah. Elkanah was a good man. Every year he took his wives and his children and went on a long journey to worship God.

For years and years ago the people did not know that they could love God and pray to God at home.

They had holy places where they went to pray to God. They would go a long way once a year to the holy place. Then they would take sheep and oxen and kill them there on the altar for a present to God. After that, they thought that God would hear their prayers. You know, of course, that God will hear your prayers at home, and that you do not have to kill anything for Him. But these people did not know that, for it was a thousand years before Jesus came to tell people what God was like.

So every year Elkanah used to go up to the holy place to pray. And when he divided the sheep and goats for the sacrifice to God, he gave some to his older wife and to her sons and daughters, but he gave twice as much to Hannah. For he loved Hannah and wanted God to listen to Hannah's prayers. He thought that God would listen better to Hannah if she gave the most.

But still Hannah had no children. And every year when they went up to the holy place, the older wife made fun of Hannah. "God will not send you any children," she said. "He sends them all to me. You are not as good as I am."

Hannah cried and did not want anything to eat, because she felt so sad. Then Elkanah, her husband, was kind to her and said: "Why do you cry, Hannah? And why will you not eat? Am I not better to you than ten sons would be?"

Then Hannah rose up after they had eaten and drunk and went over to the temple of God. The old priest was sitting by the door of the temple and watched Hannah. The old priest's name was Eli, and

he was a very good man. He saw Hannah weeping very bitterly and praying to God.

And Hannah made a promise to God, saying: "Oh, God, if you will indeed look upon me, and upon my sorrow, and if you will not forget me, but will give me a baby boy, then I will give him back to God for all his life and he shall come and live in God's house, and serve God always."

While Hannah was praying this way, Eli the priest looked at her. He saw that her mouth was moving, but he did not hear her saying anything out loud. So he did not know that she was praying. He thought a very horrid thing. He thought that she was drunk, because her mouth was moving without any words.

So Eli said: "How long will you keep on drinking; put away the wine from you."

Would you not think, when Hannah was feeling so very sad and was praying to God, that it would have made her angry to have Eli think she was drunk? Would you not think she would have wanted to say some hard things to Eli? But Hannah was very gentle and very good. So she only said: "No, my Lord, I am a woman with a sorrowful heart. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my heart to God in prayer. Do not think that I am a wicked woman. It is because I am very sad and very full of sorrow that I have been praying."

Eli was sorry for Hannah, and he was sorry that he had been so harsh. He knew from the way Hannah spoke that she was a good and gentle woman and that she loved God. So Eli answered and said: "Go

in peace, and may God give you the thing that you have asked."

Hannah replied by asking: "Give me your blessing." So Eli gave her his blessing and his wish that God would hear her prayer. Then Hannah went away with a happy heart. She no longer kept from eating any more, and her face was no longer sad.

The next morning they rose up very early and prayed to God at the holy place and then went back home again. It would be a whole year before they would come back to the holy place. But before the year was over what do you think happened? Hannah had a baby boy. Hannah was very happy, and Elkanah was very happy, because God had given Hannah what she had asked. They called the baby Samuel.

The next year it came time again for Elkanah to take his wives up to the holy place. So he said to Hannah: "This time when you go to the holy place to pray to God you can go with a happy heart. You can thank God for being so good to you."

But Hannah answered: "I will not go up with you this year to the holy place to worship God."

Hannah's husband was surprised and said: "Why will you not go up this year when God has been so good to you?" And Hannah answered: "I have promised to give my baby boy to God. So I will wait at home till my baby is old enough to go with me, and then I will take him to the holy place and give him to God, and he shall stay in God's house forever."

So Hannah stayed at home and took care of her baby. But when the baby was old enough to stay in

the house of God alone, she went up to the holy place. She took three animals to kill on the altar. And she took her boy to give to the old priest Eli, to serve God and stay in God's house forever.



HANNAH AND SAMUEL ON THE WAY TO THE TEMPLE.

They killed the animals on the altar and brought the child to Eli. Then Hannah said to Eli: "Do you remember the woman who stood and prayed in the temple over a year ago?"

And Eli said: "I remember you. Did God give you what you asked for?"

Hannah answered: "I asked God to give me a baby boy, for I was very sad because I had no children. This is the boy I prayed for; God has given me what I asked. So now, because God gave the boy to me in answer to my prayer, I have promised to give him to God, to live in God's house forever, and to be a priest and a great man of God."

Eli took Samuel into the temple and gave him a place to stay in. And Hannah said good-bye to Samuel and left him there.

Should you not think that Hannah would have been very sorry to have to leave Samuel and go back home all alone? Perhaps Hannah was a little sorry. But Hannah was very glad too, because God had given her a son, and because she could see him every year when she came up to the holy place to pray, and because Samuel was going to be a great man of God. So Hannah sang a beautiful song to show how glad she was. This is some of the song:

"My heart is glad in the Lord,
There is none holy as the Lord;
For there is none besides thee;
Neither is there any rock like our God.
Talk no more exceedingly proudly"—you remember how proud the older wife had been—
"Neither let pride come out of your mouth,
For God killeth and maketh alive,
He bringeth down to the grave and He bringeth up,
God maketh poor, and maketh rich;



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SAMUEL'S MOTHER AND THE NEW COAT.

He bringeth low; he also lifteth up.
He raiseth the poor out of the dust
To make them sit with princes.
He will keep the feet of his holy ones
But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness,
For by strength shall no man prevail,
God will judge the ends of the earth."

Then Hannah went home with her husband. But all the year long she thought about Samuel and about the holy place where Samuel lived. And she said: "Even if I cannot see my little boy, I can do something for him. I will go out into the field and pick the flax and I will make linen thread, the very finest white linen that can be made, and I will weave it into a little white robe for Samuel, to take up to the holy place for him."

So Hannah went out into the field and picked the flax and she spun it into fine thread, and made the thread into white linen. And out of the white linen she made a robe for Samuel to wear in the holy place. All the time that she made it she thought of Samuel, and of how he was going to be a great man of God some day. And every year when she went up to the holy place she took a robe with her and gave it to Samuel to wear in the holy place.

Eli said to Hannah: "Because of the goodness of your heart and because you have given your only son to God, God will give you more children in answer to your prayer." And what Eli said happened. Hannah had three boys and two girls. And Hannah was very happy because she had so many children and be-

cause the older wife could not make fun of her any more.

Hannah took care of all those children and brought them up to be good men and women. But still she never forgot about the little white robe for Samuel. For she loved Samuel best of all, because he was her first boy and because he was going to be a great man of God. Hannah always prayed to God about Samuel and asked Him to make Samuel very good.

Samuel stayed in the holy place and learned all the things that a priest must learn. He wore the long white robe that the priests wear and a white cap like the caps the priests had on their heads, and he grew to be very wise and very good.

QUESTIONS

What did Hannah want most of anything?

Where did Hannah go with her husband every year?

What did people use to think about praying to God at home?

Can you pray to God anywhere in the world?

What did the older wife say to Hannah because she had no son?

What did Hannah tell God she would do if He gave her a son?

What did Eli the priest think Hannah was doing?

Did Hannah get what she prayed for?

What did Hannah do with Samuel when he was old enough to stay alone?

What did Hannah do every year when she went up to the holy place?

THE NINETEENTH STORY

THE BOY WHO LIVED IN THE CHURCH



SOMETIMES a boy has bad boys for playmates and becomes bad like them. But there have been boys who had to play with bad boys, yet who grew up to be good men. Samuel was one of them.

For many years the boy Samuel lived in the house of God and did all the work that Eli gave him to do. He learned everything that a priest must know. Every night he slept in the temple of God, where he could take care of all the holy things so that no one could steal them.

The most holy thing in the house of God was called the ark. It was a long box of very beautiful wood, covered over with gold. It was twice as long as it was high. Inside the ark were kept the laws that God had given to Moses. Did you ever learn the Ten Commandments? Those were the laws that were kept inside the golden ark, cut on two large flat pieces of stone.

There were other very beautiful things in the temple. There was a golden candlestick with seven lights on it. There was a large brass altar outside

the temple, where all the animals were killed. And there was a beautiful golden altar inside the temple where the sweet-smelling stuffs were burnt. There was a long table of beautiful wood covered with gold, where they put all the holy bread for the priests to eat. You see, there were many things that Samuel had to take care of and keep from being stolen.

But even with all these beautiful things in His temple, God did not speak to people very often. This was because their hearts were not right. It was only once in a long while that anyone heard God's voice very plainly in his heart, telling him what the people must do to please God. The old priest Eli used to pray to God for some word, but God did not speak to him and tell him what to do and what was going to happen.

Do you know why this was? Eli was a good man, but he had two very wicked boys. And Eli knew that he ought to punish those boys and make them be good. But Eli never did it. He did not like to do it. So perhaps God did not think it was worth while speaking to Eli if Eli would not do what he knew he ought to do already.

Eli was getting to be an old, old man. He could not see very well any more. The older he grew, the more he had to let Samuel take his place in caring for the temple of God. So Samuel used to light the lamps on the golden candlesticks and do a great deal of the work around the temple.

One night Eli had gone to sleep in his place, and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel had just lain down to sleep in the house of God where

the ark was kept. All of a sudden God called Samuel and said: "Samuel, Samuel."

Then Samuel answered: "Here am I." And he got up and ran to Eli, and said: "Here I am, for you called me."

Eli said: "I did not call you. Go and lie down again." So Samuel went and lay down again.

The voice of God came again and said: "Samuel, Samuel." So Samuel answered: "Here am I." And he went quickly to Eli and said: "Here I am, for you called me." But Eli said: "I did not call you, my son. You are a good boy to be so ready to help me, but I have been asleep. I did not call you. Go and lie down again." So Samuel went and lay down again. and Eli wondered what had been happening to make Samuel think he had called him.

Eli remembered how long he had wanted to hear some word from God to tell him what was going to happen and what he should do, and he thought: "What if it should be that it was God who called Samuel?"

The more he thought, the more he was sure that that must be so. Samuel had always been such a good boy. He had been so careful in God's temple; he had taken such good care of everything. Eli was quite sure that if God spoke to anyone it would be to a boy like Samuel. So Eli said to himself: "If Samuel comes again, I know what I shall say to him, for it must be a message from God."

And sure enough, Samuel had hardly gone back to his bed before he heard a voice again saying: "Samuel, Samuel." So he rose up quickly and went

to Eli and said: "Here am I. Surely you called me this time, for I heard you very clearly."

Eli said: "My son, it must be that God called you. It is a great thing if God is going to speak to you and give you something to tell all the people. For we have waited long for the voice of God. Go, lie down, and if the voice calls you again, you must answer: 'Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.'"

So Samuel went and lay down, and he wondered if he was going to be the person to take God's word to all the Children of Israel. For it was many years since there had been a person great enough and good enough to take God's word to the people. And Samuel hoped that God would call him.

And then what do you suppose happened? Samuel heard God's voice still another time saying: "Samuel, Samuel." So he answered just as Eli told him and said: "Speak, for thy servant heareth."

The voice of God said to Samuel: "Behold I will do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. For the day is coming when I will do against Eli and his family all the things that I said long ago."

Samuel wondered what dreadful thing God was going to do to the family of Eli. And God said: "I told Eli many years ago that I would punish his family forever, because of the wicked things his sons did, and because he knew them and did not keep his sons from doing them. So I have sworn that the punishment shall never leave the house of Eli, and that no gifts of sacrifices will ever make it stop, until all of the wicked family are dead."

Then Samuel lay still till the morning thinking of the word he had heard. He felt very sorry for Eli, for Eli was such a kind old man, but he knew that Eli ought to have punished his sons and kept them from doing so much wickedness. And Samuel said to himself: "Shall I tell Eli what I have heard or not? It would make him very sorry to hear it, and perhaps he would be angry with me." So Samuel made up his mind that he would not tell Eli what God had said to him.

The next morning Samuel rose very early and opened the doors of the temple of God and put everything in order for the people who wanted to bring their sacrifices. Then Eli called to Samuel and said: "Samuel, my son."

And Samuel answered: "Here am I."

Then Eli said: "What is it that God spoke to you about in the night?" But Samuel did not speak for he was afraid to tell Eli that God was going to punish Eli's family.

But Eli said: "I pray you, do not hide it from me. For the word of God does not come often and we must know everything that God has said. If you do not tell me what it is and tell me truly, God will punish you for keeping back His word."

So Samuel said to him: "O, Eli, God said to me that he would punish the family of Eli, because of the wicked things that the sons of Eli have done, and because their father has not kept them from doing evil."

Eli was very sad. But he was a good man and he knew that it was right for God to punish his fam-

ily. He knew that he should have taught his wicked sons when they were young and that he should have kept them from doing all those wicked things. So Eli only said: "It is God's voice; let Him do what seems to Him best."

And everything happened the way Samuel had said. There was a dreadful battle and the sons of Eli were killed and Eli himself died and his sons' wives. There was no one left of all the family of Eli. And that was because Eli did not punish his children when they were young, and because he did not teach them to be good boys.

But Samuel grew to be a strong man, and a good man, and a very wise man. God was always with him. And everything that Samuel said came out just as he said. There was no one so wise as Samuel.

All the Children of Israel from the north to the south and from the east to the west knew that God had chosen Samuel to be His prophet. A prophet is a man who speaks for God and tells the people what God wants them to do. All the Children of Israel knew that God had chosen Samuel and that they must do what Samuel said if they wanted God to be with them and help them.

How do you suppose Hannah felt when Samuel grew to be such a wise man? Very, very happy, was she not? It makes mothers very happy when their boys grow up to be great and wise. And Samuel was so great and wise that all of the Children of Israel knew about it. So Hannah was glad that she had given Samuel to God, to serve God always and to live in God's house forever.

QUESTIONS

What did Samuel do in the house of God?

What were some of the beautiful things in the house of God?

Why did not God speak to Eli very often?

Where did Samuel sleep at night?

What did he hear one night after he had gone to bed?

What did he do when he heard the voice?

What did Eli tell Samuel to do?

What did Samuel answer when he heard the voice again?

What did God tell Samuel?

How did Eli feel when he knew what God had said?

What did Samuel grow up to be?

Do good boys usually grow up to be good men?

When should we begin to know and love God?



THE TWENTIETH STORY

THE WICKED SONS OF ELI



PRIEST named Eli had two sons. Do you remember any story that told about Eli? Yes, the story of Samuel. And do you remember anything about Eli's two sons? Yes, they were wicked sons.

Eli was a good man, but he was too good-natured. Do you know what good-natured means? It is when people do not care very much what other people do; they just smile and look pleased even when other people do wrong things. So when Eli's sons did wrong things, Eli did not like to bother about it; he just let them alone.

Sometimes you think that that would be just the way you would like your father and mother to do, do you not? It would be so nice if they would let you alone a little. It is mean to have them always bothering about what you do. If they would just let you alone to do what you wanted to, and not care very much what you did, it would be very pleasant, would it not? But just wait and see what happened to Eli's boys because he never punished them.

Eli was the priest of the holy place that belonged to God. His two boys lived with him. He used to

think: "When they are grown up they will be priests like me. So he told them all about the temple and he showed them all the wonderful things that were kept in God's house. Do you remember what some of the things were? The golden candlestick, and the big brass altar to kill animals on, and the little golden altar to burn sweet-smelling stuff on, and the table for the holy bread. And then what was the holiest thing of all, the thing in front of which the priest used to stand when he prayed to God? The ark. You remember the ark, a long wooden box of beautiful wood, covered over with gold and with two golden angels on top. Inside the ark were the Ten Commandments of God, written on stone tablets. If you have not learned those Ten Commandments already, ask someone to teach them to you. Then you will know some of the things that Eli's sons had to learn.

Should you not think that the two boys who lived near God's temple all their lives would learn to love God and to obey Him? But they did not love God. They made fun of the temple to each other when they thought their father could not hear. They said: "What silly people those are, to come up here and say their prayers to God!"

Eli knew that his boys did not love God and made fun of the temple. And sometimes he knew that they did a worse thing. Sometimes when the people who came up to pray were thinking so hard about what they were going to say to God that they were not noticing anything, Eli's two bad boys would creep up behind them and steal the things they had brought to eat. Then they would laugh at the people for

loving God and for thinking about Him. And all this time Eli never punished them.

Then when the two boys were older they began to do still worse things to the people that came up to pray to God. This was the way the people used to do when they came to the holy place. They would bring an animal, a sheep or a goat, and they would give it to the priest. Then the priest would kill it on the brass altar. Part of it he would burn on the altar before God, and the rest he gave back to the man that brought the animal. Then the man would put it in a big pot on a fire to cook.

While it was cooking the priest's servant would come out with a long hook. The hook had three points to it so that it would hold a good deal of meat. The priest's servant stuck this long hook in the pot or kettle where the meat was boiling and then pulled it out again. All the meat that came out with it belonged to the priests.

You see, the priests had to have some way to live. They could not keep sheep and they could not do other farming work, because they had to give all their time in the temple of God. And in those days, years and years ago, there was not any money to pay people with. The only way you could pay people was by giving them something to eat or something to wear. And that was the way the priests got what they had to eat.

Now do you think the priests had better meat to eat than the other people or not? It would all depend, would it not, on just what meat the hook happened to bring up? Sometimes it would be better and some-

times not so good, and sometimes there would be a great deal of meat and sometimes not very much. But no one could say that the priest was selfish and was taking more than his share, could he? Because the priest got just what was fastened on the hook.

But now, when the two sons of Eli got to be priests, what do you suppose they did? They said to each other: "These are all silly people; we will make them



THE SERVANT DEMANDS THE BEST MEAT.

give us the best." So, as soon as the animal was killed, even before the fat was burnt before God on the altar, these bad sons of Eli sent their servant. Their servant said to the people: "Give me now my choice of the best meat to take to the priest."

But the people said: "We must surely wait till the fat is burned on the altar before God, for we always do that before we take any ourselves."

But the servant answered: "My masters want the best meat and they want it now. If you do not give it to us, we will make you." So the two bad sons of Eli made the people give them the best meat even before they had burnt the meat that they gave to God.

There were many other wicked things that Eli's sons did to the good people that came up to the Temple to pray. And at last a man of God came to Eli and said: "God has seen the way your sons do, robbing the people of their meat and treating them very cruelly. They take all the things that should belong to God and they keep them for themselves. And because you have not punished them, you shall see them die before they are old. For God will punish them."

It all happened just as the man of God had said.

Something even worse than he had said happened, for all the Children of Israel had a great battle. Some people, known as the Philistines, came to fight them. By and by you will read about another war that the Children of Israel had with the Philistines, when one little boy killed a big giant.

But this time the Children of Israel did not beat the Philistines. The Philistines fought so hard that the Children of Israel turned and ran. They ran away very fast, and four thousand of them were killed.

When they got back into camp, the old wise men said: "Why is it that the Children of Israel ran away to-day? It must be that God was not with us. We will send to the holy place and get the holy ark of God from the Temple, the beautiful ark of wood cov-

ered over with gold. And we will carry it with us into the battle. Then surely God will be with us and help us beat the Philistines.”

So they sent to the holy place to get the ark of God. And the two sons of Eli came with the ark. As soon as the Children of Israel saw the ark, they raised a great shout and said: “We have God with us now; we will surely beat the Philistines.” But do you think the two wicked sons of Eli could bring God to the Children of Israel? Of course not.

When the Philistines heard the great shout that the Children of Israel made, they were afraid and said: “Why do the Children of Israel shout so?”

Then they heard that the ark of God had been brought into the camp of the Children of Israel. They were very much afraid, for they said: “If God is going to help them what can we do? But we will fight our best anyway, for we will not let them make us their slaves and kill us.”

The next morning the Philistines rose up early and came with swords and spears and bows and arrows against the Children of Israel, and what do you think happened? The Children of Israel turned and ran away, and left the wonderful ark of God behind, for the Philistines to take. And both the two bad sons of Eli were killed.

So that was what happened to the sons of Eli. But worse than that had happened, for the wonderful ark of God was gone, the holy ark that the priests used to pray before.

All this time poor old Eli was waiting at home to see what would happen. He was much afraid, for

his two sons had gone to the battle, and he did not know whether they would be killed or not. But he cared more for one thing than even for his two sons. He cared most of all for the holy ark. He did not believe that God would ever be in the holy place again, or ever hear the people's prayers again, if the wonderful ark was lost. So he sat in a high seat by the gate of the city, waiting for the news.

Then a man came running from the battle-field. His clothes were torn and there was dirt on his head. This was a sign that he had bad news. The man came to where Eli was sitting outside the gate of the city, but the man hurried right on past the gate and told the people inside. He did not want to tell Eli, and he knew that Eli could not see him go past, for Eli was very old and nearly blind.

There was a terrible cry through the city when they knew that the battle was lost. Eli heard the cry and asked: "What is it that has happened?" So at last they came and told Eli.

The man said: "I have come from the battle-field where the fighting has been. I ran away from the battle-field."

Then Eli shook all over and he asked: "What has happened? What has happened? Is there good news or bad?"

The man said: "The Philistines rose up early in the morning and came against us, and all the Children of Israel ran away. Your two sons are dead, and the ark of God is lost."

When Eli heard that the ark of God was lost, the ark that he had taken care of all his life till he was

an old man, he did not want to live any more. He leaned back and he fell out of his seat by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died.

And that was the end of the family of Eli. It happened because Eli's sons were wicked boys and because Eli did not teach them to be better and did not punish them when they did wrong.

QUESTIONS

What was the matter with Eli's sons?

What did Eli want his boys to be when they grew up?

Did Eli's sons love God?

What were some of the wicked things they did to the people?

How did the priests get their food?

What did Eli's sons do to get the best meat?

What did the Children of Israel send for when they were beaten in battle?

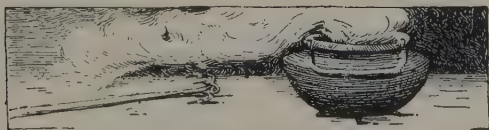
Who took the ark of God to the army?

What happened to Eli's sons?

What happened to the ark of God?

What happened to Eli when he heard the bad news?

Why do fathers and mothers sometimes have to punish bad children?



THE TWENTY-FIRST STORY

HUNTING A KING



SOMETIMES a boy goes out to hunt for something, and does not find it, but finds something else. This is a story about that kind of boy.

You remember the story about Samuel and how he grew up in the house of God, and became a great and wise man, telling all the people what God wanted them to do. After many years Samuel grew very old, and Samuel's sons were not wise and good like Samuel, so the people thought: "What would happen if Samuel died? We have no one in all the land to tell us what to do except Samuel."

So the people all came to Samuel and said: "Make us a king, for if you should die there is no one in all the land wise enough to tell us what to do."

In those days the Children of Israel did not have kings. Everyone did just what he wanted to do, and there was no one to rule. If one man killed another man, there was no king to punish him. But the friends of the man who was killed would go and kill the other man, and the killing would go on and on and never stop. Sometimes there would be a man like Samuel who was so wise and good that all the people

knew he spoke the word of God. Then they would do what he told them. But sometimes when the wise man was dead, there would be no one to manage things for many years, no one to lead the armies to fight, and no one to punish wicked people. That was why the Children of Israel asked Samuel to find them a king.

At first it made Samuel very sad to think that the people wanted a king. He feared that the time had come when he was too old to lead the people. So Samuel said to the Children of Israel: "Why do you want a king? I will tell you what a king will do to you. He will take all your boys and will make them his servants. He will make them take care of his horses and of his war-chariots. He will make them run before him and shout: 'The king is coming.' He will make them do all his work and he will not pay them anything for it. This is what a king will do if I make you a king."

But the Children of Israel still said: "We want a king."

Then Samuel answered: "Do you still want a king? I will tell you what else the king will do to you. He will take away your girls and he will make them his servants. He will make them cook for him and bake for him, and make perfumes for him. He will take away your fields, and your orchards, and all the best things that you have. And you will have to do as he tells you to do."

But the Children of Israel still said: "We want a king, for we want to be like other people, who have a king to tell them what to do. Even if our king does

all the things you say, it will be better than not having anyone to lead us out to war and to punish wicked people."

Samuel went and prayed to God about it, and said: "The people want me to choose a king for them." And God answered: "Do what the people have asked of you."

So Samuel said to the Children of Israel: "Go back now to your own homes and your own cities, and I will seek for a king for you." So the Children of Israel all went home and Samuel prayed to God about it, and wondered what kind of a man he should choose for king.

Now in one of the smallest towns of the whole land there lived a young man named Saul. His family was a small family that nobody thought was very much good, and his town was a little town that no one cared about. But he was a very strong and fine young man.

One day it happened that the asses that belonged to his father were lost. Do you know what an ass is? It is a kind of animal that is used for the same things we use mules and horses for. So Saul's father said to Saul: "Take one of the servants with you, and go hunt for the asses, for they have wandered through the land and I do not know where you will find them."

So Saul took one of the servants and went north through the hill-country, looking for the asses. But he could not find them anywhere. After they had gone for a long way, Saul said to his servant: "Come, let us go back. For we cannot find the asses, and if we do not go home soon, my father will stop caring

about the asses and begin to be afraid that something has happened to us."

Then the servant said: "Do you see the town just in front of us? That is the place where Samuel, the great man of God lives. He is a very wise man and he knows about everything. Let us go in and ask him what has happened to our asses."

But Saul said: "What present have we to take to the wise man of God? All of the food that we brought is gone, and we have no money. We must not ask him to help us unless we can pay him something."

The servant said: "I have some silver here. We will give that to the man and ask him to tell us what to do." So they went to the town.

Just as they were going up the hill, they met a maiden who was drawing water at a well, and they said to her: "Is the wise man in the town?" And she said: "Make haste, and you will find him, for he is going up to the holy place at noon to bless all the people. The people will not eat until he blesses them."

Saul and his servant went quickly into the town till they came to the holy place where Samuel was. As soon as Samuel looked at Saul, he saw how very tall he was, and how very strong and brave, and he thought in his heart: "This is the man the Children of Israel must have for king, to help them fight the Philistines."

So Samuel prayed to God and said: "Is this the man I shall choose for king?" And God answered: "This is the man."

Then Saul came near to Samuel and said: "Tell me where the house of the wise man of God is?" And

Samuel said: "I am the man you seek. Come up with me to the holy place, for you shall eat with me today. But do not bother any more about the asses that were lost. For word has come to me that they are found. And I have something else to say to you."

Saul wondered what Samuel could have to say to him. And Samuel said: "Whom is it that all the Children of Israel wish for, and who is to give them what they wish? Shall not their help come from you?"

But Saul answered: "I come from a very little town and my family is a family that no one cares about. What can you want with me?"

Then Samuel said: "Wait till tomorrow. Tonight you shall stay with me."

So Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them to his house and gave them the very best place in it. He made a feast for Saul and invited thirty persons. He said to the cook: "Bring here the piece of meat that I told you to save for a great celebration." So the best meat was brought and given to Saul. And Saul wondered what all this might mean.

But all through the feast Samuel talked to Saul and asked him many questions. For he wanted to see if Saul was as wise as he was strong. In everything Saul answered wisely. And after the feast was over Samuel and Saul went up on the roof of the house under the stars and talked for a long, long time till it was very late. And everything Saul said pleased Samuel so that he thought: "This is surely the man that God has chosen."

The next morning they rose early and while it was

still morning Samuel said to Saul: "Come out with me on the road so that I may say good-bye to you." So they went out on the way together.

They went down from the holy place where Samuel's house was, and they went through the town and out through the gates, and then they went past the well where Saul had seen the girl drawing water. And after a while they reached a place where no one could see them. Then Samuel said to Saul: Send your servant ahead, but stay here yourself, so that I may tell you the word that God sends you." So Saul sent the servant ahead.

Then Samuel took a long bottle of sweet-smelling oil, that was very precious and was used only for great people, and he poured it on Saul's head, and he kissed him and said: "This shall be a sign that God has chosen you to be king over the Children of Israel." Saul was very glad that such a wise man as Samuel had chosen him to be king.

Samuel said: "When you have left me, you will go on home and you will meet two men. They will say to you: "The asses that you went out to hunt are found, and your father is not thinking any more about the asses, but he is wondering what has happened to you.

"After that you will come to a big oak tree, and there you will meet three men carrying food, and they will bow down before you and give you two loaves of bread. And after that you will meet some men of God coming down from a holy place with singing, and when you hear them, the voice of God will come to you, and your heart will be changed, and you will

be turned into another man. And after these things have happened, then do what seems good to you, for God will be with you."

Then Saul said to Samuel: "But where will you go?"

And Samuel answered: "After seven days I will come down after you to show you what you must do."

All these things happened the way Samuel had said. Saul met the man who told him about the asses, and then he met the three men who gave him the bread. And then he met the men of God coming down from the holy place. And God's spirit came to him and changed his heart, and made him more wise and brave than he had been before.

And as soon as Saul got home, his uncle asked him: "Where did you go, Saul, and why have you been so long away?"

Saul said: "We went to look for the asses, and we wandered for many days seeking them. But after a while, when we did not find them, we came to Samuel and asked him about them."

Then Saul's uncle asked him: "What did Samuel say to you? For Samuel is a very great and wise man, and whatever he says comes true."

But Saul only answered: "Samuel told us that the asses were found and that my father wanted me home again." But all that Samuel said about being king, Saul kept quiet about, for he knew in his heart that he must not tell about it, until Samuel told him that he might do so.

And that was the way that Samuel found the first king for the Children of Israel.

QUESTIONS

What did all the people ask of Samuel?

Why did they want a king?

What did Samuel tell the people that a king would do to them?

What did Samuel say to the people when they still wanted a king?

What did Saul go out to hunt?

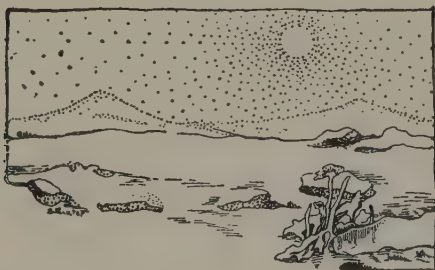
How did he come to find Samuel?

What did Samuel say to Saul?

What did Samuel do to Saul the next morning?

What was that a sign of?

What did Saul say when he reached home?



THE TWENTY-SECOND STORY

A YOUNG KING PROVES HIS WORTH



YOU remember how all the Children of Israel came to Samuel and said: "Choose a king for us, that he may lead us out to fight, and that he may punish wicked men." And you remember how it was that Samuel found the man to be king. You remember the young man Saul, who went out to hunt for his father's asses and was anointed by Samuel.

Well, seven days after Samuel had sent Saul home again, he called all the children of Israel together to the holy place. And he said to them: "Do you still want a king?"

Then they said: "We still want a king, for we have no one to lead us out to fight and no one to punish wicked men."

But Samuel answered very sadly: "If you had obeyed God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, and who took care of you in the desert country, He would have led you out to fight and He would have punished your wicked men. He would have been like a king to you. But you have not obeyed God, and you have not let Him help you, so now you want a king."

The Children of Israel shouted: "Yes, we want a king."

So Samuel said to the Children of Israel: "Do you remember what I said a king would do to you? You have not had a king for many years. You have been doing just what you wanted to do. Do you know that a king must have servants, and that he will take your young men and make them take care of his horses and war-chariots and do all of the work he wants done?"

The people shouted and said: "We know it, but give us a king."

Then Samuel said for the last time: "Do you know that a king must give great feasts and have people to cook them? He will take away your young girls and make them be his cooks and his servants, to bake for him and make him perfumes and look after his many palaces."

The people shouted again: "We know all this, but still we want a king."

So Samuel said: "Then I will choose you a king." And all the Children of Israel shouted for joy because they were going to have a king to lead them out to fight.

Then Samuel said: "Let every tribe of the Children of Israel come up to the holy place, each tribe by itself." You remember who the Children of Israel were? They were the great-great-great-ever-so-many-great-grandchildren of Jacob and his twelve sons. And all the children of Benjamin were called one tribe and lived together, and the children of the other brothers were other tribes. That was the way

they divided the Children of Israel. Every tribe had cities and land of its own.

All the tribes came up to the holy place one by one. When each one came, Samuel went into the holy place and prayed to God, for he wanted to make quite sure that he really knew the right one that God had chosen. The first tribe came up, and Samuel said: "No, this is not the one."

Then the second tribe came up, and Samuel went and prayed to God and then came back and said: "No, this is not the one." And it was the same way with all the first eleven tribes.

But what do you suppose the first tribe and the second tribe and the third tribe did when Samuel said they were not the ones? Did they go back and say: "Samuel knows best; he is choosing our king. When he chooses the king we will all love our king and do what he tells us?" Was that what they said? No, they were very angry. They were angry because the king was not going to be from their tribe. They said: "This old Samuel does not know how to choose a king. Why should we do what he tells us to? We are the best tribe anyway."

That was what every one of the tribes said to themselves when Samuel told them: "You are not the ones." You see they were not really ready to have a king and to do what the king told them to do; they just thought they were ready. And Samuel knew it. That was why Samuel did not want to choose them a king till they were sure they wanted one.

Last of all the tribe of Benjamin came up. You remember that Benjamin was the youngest of all the

brothers. The tribe of Benjamin was the smallest of all the tribes. Then Samuel went in and prayed to God, and he came out and said: "The tribe of Benjamin is taken."

Then all the people of the tribe of Benjamin shouted for joy and every man thought: "I wonder if I am going to be chosen king." But Samuel said: "Let all the families in the tribe come up one by one, and I will choose one of the families."

So all the families of the tribe came up one by one, and Samuel said to the first one: "This is not the one." And all the people in this family said: "Samuel does not know how to choose a king." They forgot how happy they had been just a little while before when their tribe was chosen, and how wise they thought Samuel then. They all thought Samuel was not any good unless he chose them. But Samuel could not choose all of them.

After a while one of the families was chosen; it was the family in which Saul was. Then Samuel said: "Bring to me all the names of all the men in your family, and I will choose the king." So they brought Samuel all the names of the men in the family. And the name of Saul was taken. Then all the men of the family shouted aloud that Saul was king.

But when they looked for Saul to make him king, what do you suppose happened? Nobody could find Saul. They all wondered where he was and why he had hidden away. Was he afraid that the people would not want him for king? Or did he know that it was a very great thing to be king, and was he afraid that he was not good enough?

Then Samuel said: "He is hidden among the baggage of the people." So they all ran to the place where the baggage was kept,—all the food and the clothes and the blankets that the people brought up to the holy place. And there they found Saul.



SAMUEL ANOINTING SAUL.

They brought Saul out to the people, and he was taller than any other man there. He looked braver and more like a king. And Samuel said: "This is

the king God has chosen for you. There is no one like him among all the Children of Israel."

The people who were near shouted: "Long live the king." But some of the men who were angry because they were not chosen said: "Who is this Saul and what can he do for us? We will not have him for our king."

Samuel took a great book and wrote in it all the laws of the kingdom and he put the book in the holy place before God. And Samuel sent the people away, every man to his own house.

Then Saul went down to his home. Some of the strong men went with him. They saw what a fine, brave man he was, and they said: "We will follow him for our king, and serve him." But a great many other men went home, and said: "We will not have Saul for our king till he shows that he can do something."

But the time was coming when Saul would show what he could do. Do you remember the wicked Children of Ammon that Jephthah killed and drove out into the desert? Well, the years went by and the Children of Ammon were strong again, so they came up to a city that belonged to the Children of Israel. They fought the city and they put soldiers all around it, so that the people could not get any food. Then the men of the city said: "What must we do, if you let us go? Shall we be your servants, or what will you expect of us?"

The king of the Children of Ammon answered: "This is what you must do: You must come out of the city, and I will put out the right eye of every man

in the town. That will show that you are my servants."

That was a very terrible thing to ask, was it not? So the men of the city said: "Give us seven days to decide." And he gave them seven days. So they sent a man to Saul to tell him what had happened.

When Saul heard the news he was out in the field. Then the spirit of God came to Saul and he became very strong and brave. He took one of his animals and cut it into pieces, and he sent the pieces through the land to all the Children of Israel and said: "Whoever does not come and help me, this is what I will do to his animals and everything that he has. I will cut them up just like this." So all the people came out to help Saul.

Then Saul sent word to the men in the city and said: "Tomorrow by the time the sun is hot, we will save you." Then the men were very glad for the next day was the time when they were going to have all their eyes put out.

The next day Saul rose up early and led the Children of Israel to fight. They came down like a great army in the middle of the morning at the time when the sun was hot, and they drove away the Children of Ammon and killed them, till no two of them were left together.

So all the Children of Israel shouted for Saul and said: "Saul is our king; Saul is our king. He has shown us what he can do. He has driven away the Children of Ammon. Where are the men who did not want Saul for king? Bring them out and we will kill them."

But Saul said: "You shall not hurt anyone today. For God has helped us save the people of this town. And no one shall be killed because of me." And all the people shouted for Saul again, because he was so kind-hearted and because he would not hurt the men who did not want him for king.

Then Samuel called all the people together and said: "We will make a great feast for Saul." And Samuel said: "I am now an old man, and I have led the people for many years. And now I have chosen Saul for you to be your king. Here I am, now let any one tell: Have I ever done anyone any wrong? Have I ever taken anyone's money or sheep or ox? Let anyone speak out before God and the king."

And they all cried aloud: "You have never done us a wrong, but you have helped us all your life."

Then Samuel said: "One word I leave with you. Love God and obey Him, and you shall be strong. But if you do not obey God, your king will not be able to help you. Your enemies will come against you and kill you, and God will not fight for you if you do wickedly."

And all the people shouted: "We will obey God and do what is good all our days."

So they made a great feast there and all the Children of Israel took Saul to be their king.

QUESTIONS

What did all the Children of Israel come together for?

What did Samuel say God would have done for them if they had loved Him?

Why did Samuel have all the tribes come up one by one?

What did the tribes that were not chosen do?

What tribe was chosen?

Why did all the people who were not chosen think that Samuel was not any good?

Who was chosen king?

Where did they find Saul?

Did all the people say they would follow Saul?

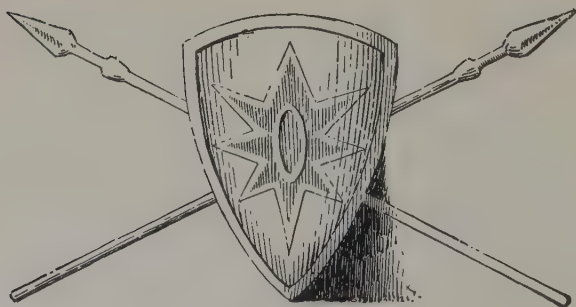
What happened to one of the cities of the Children of Israel?

What did Saul do when he heard of it?

What did the Children of Israel think of Saul when he had won the battle?

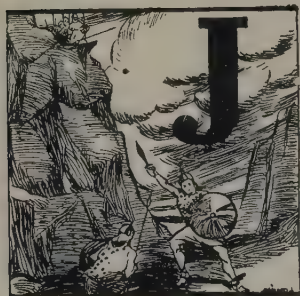
How did Saul show that he was kind-hearted?

What did Samuel say to the Children of Israel about God?



THE TWENTY-THIRD STORY

JONATHAN AND HIS ARMOR-BEARER



JUST think how happy a father must be whose son does a brave deed. This is a story about such a son.

Once upon a time, thousands of years ago, when Saul was king of the Children of Israel, there was a great war in the land. The men of Israel, with Saul for their general, went down to fight the Philistines. Saul took two thousand men with spears and swords and shields, and they fought with one of the towns of the Philistines and killed all the men that were in it.

Then Saul sent his messengers through the land, and he said to them: "In every place where you go, blow the trumpet, and when the people come together, you must say: 'This is the trumpet of the king and he calls you out to fight! For Saul has killed the men in one town of the Philistines, and all the rest of the Philistines will be coming soon to make war.'"

So the messengers went through the land. And they blew the trumpet of the king and all the people came together to Saul, to help fight the Philistines.

The Philistines came up to fight the Children of Israel. They had thirty-thousand war-chariots, and

six thousand men on horses, and thousands and thousands of ordinary soldiers, so that Saul and all the Children of Israel were afraid. For the Philistines were like the sand of the sea and the stars of the sky; there were so many of them.

The men of Israel ran away from this terrible army and hid themselves in caves and in the woods and in holes in the ground. They hid almost everywhere to get away from the terrible Philistines and their war-chariots.

Then Saul said to the people: "Come all together to the holy place and Samuel will make a sacrifice there to God for us. And then we will go out to fight the Philistines." So they came all together to the holy place.

But Samuel did not come as soon as Saul wanted him to come. And Saul began to be more and more afraid. For he said: "Surely all the people will run away before the sacrifices are given, and then what will be the use of having the sacrifices any more?"

So Saul went out before the people and said: "Bring hither the sacrifices to me, and I will offer them. For I am your king and I will make the sacrifices before God on the altar." And that was a wicked thing to do, for only the man of God could offer the sacrifices.

As soon as Saul had finished making the sacrifices, Samuel came. And Saul went out to meet him. But Samuel was very angry. And he said: "What hast thou done?"

Then Saul said: "I was afraid that the people would all run away, so I offered the sacrifices. For

the Philistines are gathered together and they are coming down upon us.”

Samuel answered: “Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of God which He commanded thee. For God would have made thee king forever. But now thou shalt be cast out of thy kingdom and another king shall come in thy place.” So Samuel arose and went away from Saul and came to him no more all the days of his life.

Saul gathered his army together to fight. And there were only six hundred men who came. All the rest were hiding in the holes of the ground. And Saul was afraid that the Children of Israel would be beaten.

Saul had a son named Jonathan. He was a brave young man and very strong. In another story some day you will hear about what a good friend he was. But this story shows how well he could fight when he thought the Lord was on his side.

One day Jonathan said to the servant who carried his armor: “Come, let us go over to the camp of the Philistines and see what we can do. For God can help with a few men or with many.”

Then the armor-bearer answered: “I will go with you wherever you go.” But Jonathan did not tell his father, for he said: “I will wait until I have killed some of the Philistines.”

So Jonathan said to his armor-bearer: “This will be the sign I will take. We will go over to the hill near the Philistines and then we will call out to them. And if they say, ‘Wait till we come and fight you’; then we will wait. But if they say, ‘Come on over

and see what you can do,' then we will rush upon them, and God will make us strong to fight."

So Jonathan and his armor-bearer went up to the place where the Philistines were camped. And the Philistines laughed when they saw two men coming out to meet them. And they said: "See where these Children of Israel are coming out of the holes where they have been hiding."

The Philistines called out to Jonathan: "Come on over to us and we will show you a thing."

Jonathan said to his armor-bearer: "It is the sign. Come after me, for God will give us strength to fight them." So Jonathan rushed up the hill at the Philistines. He climbed up the hill on his hands and on his feet, and his armor-bearer went after him. And they killed all the Philistines that tried to stop them. In just one little place they killed twenty men.

The rest of the Philistines drew back and were afraid. They said: "No one can kill these men: they must have some charm that helps them. If all the rest of the Children of Israel are as strong as these, what will happen to us?"

So there was trembling in the camp of the Philistines. All the men shook for fear. They shook so hard and there were so many thousand people shaking, that the earth began shaking too. And as soon as that happened, all the Philistines turned and ran away as fast as they could.

The watchman of the Children of Israel were looking out, and they saw the Philistines running. So they came and told Saul. Then Saul was very much surprised and he said. "Have any of our men been

fighting the Philistines? Let us count our men and see if they are all here."

So they counted the men of the Children of Israel, and they were all there except Jonathan and his armor-bearer. But Saul never thought that his son Jonathan could do such a great deed as that.

Saul said: "We will go after the Philistines and kill them while they are running away. Do not let any man stop for anything till the Philistines are killed. Do not let any man stop for anything, even to eat or to drink. If any man eats or drinks before the end of the day, and before we have killed the Philistines, that man shall be killed."

So the people went after the Philistines and killed them. And none of the people tasted food. They had to go through a thick wood, and the wood was full of wild honey. As soon as the people came into the wood, the honey dropped out of the honey trees where the bees lived. It began to run down the sides of the trees to the ground. All of the people were very hungry and wanted some of that honey. But they were afraid to eat it because of what Saul had said, and because he had sworn that he would kill anyone who ate before the end of the day.

But there was some one who had not heard what Saul said. Who was it? Jonathan. Yes, Jonathan. He went with his armor-bearer after the Philistines and he killed a great many of them. And when he came to the wood, and saw all the good honey running down the trees to the ground, he was very hungry, for he had been fighting a long while.

He said to his armor-bearer: "I will eat some of

that honey, and it will give me strength to go on fighting." Then Jonathan stretched out a long stick and got it all covered with honey, and he put it in his mouth and ate it.

The people found out what Jonathan had done, and they all cried: "Did you not hear what your father said?" But Jonathan answered: "How could I hear what my father said? I was out fighting the Philistines."

The people told him, "Your father said that no one should eat anything all day, and that we should kill the Philistines and not stop to eat and drink."

But Jonathan answered: "My father said a foolish thing. For how can you be strong enough to fight if you do not eat? Just see how strong I have been since I ate a little honey. It would be better if everyone had eaten and then we would have killed many more of the Philistines."

So the people fought the Philistines all day long. But when night came, and they had taken a great many sheep and cows and oxen that belonged to the Philistines, they looked at the animals and thought how hungry they were. So the people fell upon the sheep and the cows and killed them and ate them up all raw and bloody because they were so hungry.

Then they came and told Saul what Jonathan had done. And they said: "Your son Jonathan ate the honey in the wood. And when we told him what you had said, he answered that you had spoken foolishly and that it was better to eat, so that we could be strong to fight the Philistines."

As soon as Saul heard this he was very angry. And

he said: "Bring Jonathan here to me." So they brought Jonathan to Saul. Saul asked him: "What is this I hear of you? What have you done?"

What would you have said to Saul if you had been Jonathan? Do you not think Jonathan could have told Saul that he had made all the Philistines run away, and that if it had not been for him the Children of Israel would have been beaten? But Jonathan only said: "I saw some honey in the wood when I was going after the Philistines, and I took some on the end of a stick and ate it."

Then Saul said: "Did you not know that I had told the Children of Israel not to eat all day till we had killed the Philistines?" Jonathan answered: "I did not know anything about it when I ate, but they told me about it afterwards, and I thought it was a very foolish thing for you to say, and very cruel to keep the people hungry."

This made Saul very angry and he said. "Even if Jonathan is my son, he shall die. I must keep my word that I spoke."

But do you think the Children of Israel were going to let Jonathan die, after all he had done for them that day? Of course not. They came up to Saul and said: "Shall Jonathan die, who has this day saved all of us from the Philistines? Surely if Jonathan ought to die, God would have shown it. But instead of that, God has given him great strength and helped him against our enemies."

So the people took Jonathan away from Saul and would not let him be killed. Then Saul went back from the Philistines, and they went home to their

own land. And there was no more fighting for a long time.

QUESTIONS

Who came up to fight the Children of Israel?

What did Saul send messengers around the land to do?

When all the people came together and Samuel was not there, what did Saul do?

What did Samuel say to him?

Who was Jonathan?

Where were the Children of Israel hiding?

What did Jonathan and his armor-bearer do?

What did the Children of Israel do when they saw the Philistines running?

What foolish thing did Saul tell them?

What did Jonathan eat?

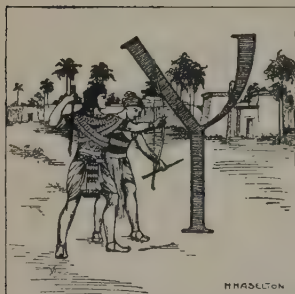
What was Saul going to do to him for it?

Why could not Saul kill Jonathan?



THE TWENTY-FOURTH STORY

THE BOY WHO KEPT SHEEP



DO you remember the story about Jonathan and his armor-bearer? What did that story make you think about King Saul? He did not continue as wise and good a man as when he was first made king, did he? When Samuel first chose him to be king, he was young and strong and wise.

But he began to feel proud of being king. He thought that he was greater than Samuel who had anointed him to be king, and that he could do just as he chose.

Every year he grew worse and worse. When Samuel brought him the word of God and said: "God wants you to do this for Him," Saul would say to himself: "I will not do it unless I feel like it."

Then Samuel said to himself: "I see that God does not want Saul for king any longer, for Saul is growing proud and wicked. I will seek for a new king." And Samuel wept for the wicked things that Saul had done.

Then the word of God came to Samuel: "How long will you weep for the things that Saul is doing? Saul shall not be king over Israel any longer. But

there is something better for you than weeping. Arise and fill the sacred horn with oil, and go to Bethlehem to the house of Jesse, for I have chosen a king among his sons."

Samuel answered: "How shall I go down to Bethlehem to choose a king? For Saul will hear it and he will be angry with me, and he will kill me and the king I have chosen."

Then God answered: "Take an animal to sacrifice in Bethlehem and say: 'I am going down to make a great sacrifice.' And invite Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice. And I will show thee there what thou shalt do. And thou shalt choose the son that I show thee."

So Samuel arose and went down to Bethlehem. He took with him an animal to sacrifice and the holy horn full of oil. For this was the way they did to any man who was chosen to be king or priest or anything important. The man of God took a horn full of holy oil and poured it on his head, and that was a sign that he was chosen for a great thing. But he did not always know for what thing he was chosen.

When Samuel came to the town of Bethlehem the chief men of the town came out to meet him. They were very much afraid, for they knew that Samuel was a great man and that he had quarreled with King Saul. So they did not know why he had come to their town. They thought it might be something that would bring a war.

The chief men of the town came out to see Samuel and said to him: "Have you come to us peaceably?"

And Samuel answered: "I have come to you peaceably and not to hurt you. I have come to make a

great sacrifice to God. So wash yourselves and make yourselves clean in your bodies and clean in your hearts, and come to the sacrifice, and let Jesse and his sons come also."

So Samuel made a great feast and he sacrificed the animal he had brought and gave it to the people to eat. And Jesse and his seven sons were there. They were strong young men, who knew how to fight and were not afraid, and they all looked strong enough and brave enough to be king. Samuel wondered which one it could be that God wanted.

Then the oldest son came by, and Samuel looked at him. And he thought to himself: "Surely this is the one that God has chosen. For he is tall and strong and brave and he looks as if he would make a good king." So he took up his horn of oil and thought: "I will go and anoint him now."

But the voice of God spoke to Samuel and said: "Look not on his face, nor on his height, and think not of his strength and of how brave he is. I have not chosen this one. For men look on the outside of a man. They think he is good if he seems good, and brave if he seems brave. But God looks on the heart."

Samuel said to Jesse: "Let me see your next son, for I wish to choose a man for a great thing, and God has not chosen the oldest." So Jesse called his next son, and Samuel looked at him. And Samuel saw what a fine-looking young man he was, and Samuel thought: "Surely this must be the one that God has chosen; for he looks as if he would make a good king."

But then Samuel remembered how fine Saul had looked when he was chosen king, and how tall he had

been and how brave, and Samuel said to himself: "Surely it is hard for a man to know what other men will really be. I must let God decide." Then it seemed to him that God's voice said: "No, this is not the one."

So Samuel said to Jesse: "This is not the one that God has chosen."

Jesse next brought his third son to Samuel and said: "It is strange that you do not take my oldest boys. But you are a man of God and you must know what God wishes."

So Samuel looked at the third son, and said: "God has not chosen this one either."

Then Jesse was very much surprised, but he brought his fourth son and his fifth son and his sixth son and his seventh son to Samuel. And Jesse said: "It is a great thing for me that one of my sons should be chosen by Samuel. And even if it is not the oldest son, nor the next son, yet Samuel is a man of God and what he chooses must be right. And whichever of my sons it is, still it is great that he should be chosen."

Samuel looked at every one of the seven sons of Jesse and said: "God has not chosen these." And Samuel thought to himself: "Can it be that I was mistaken when I thought God sent me to Jesse and his sons?" And he was almost ready to go away when he thought of something, and he said to Jesse: "Are these all the sons you have?"

Then Jesse said: "These are all my grown-up sons. There is still the youngest, but he is only a boy and he is keeping the sheep. Surely if these are not the right ones, he would never do."

But Samuel said: "Send and bring him here; we will not sit down to the feast until he comes." So they sent and brought David. They went out to the sheep-field where he was taking care of the sheep and said: "Your father wants you to come to the feast, for the great man Samuel has asked for you."

David was very glad to go to the feast and he was gladder still that the great man Samuel should ask for him when he was only the youngest son.

When David came in, Samuel looked at him. And David was young and very beautiful and strong. He had a face that Samuel liked to look at. And God's voice spoke to Samuel and said: "Arise, anoint him, for this is the one."

Samuel arose and took the horn of oil that he had brought with him all the way from the holy place, and he poured it on David's head. And the Spirit of God came to David and made him strong and brave and good and wise enough to be a king.

But Samuel knew that the time was not yet come to make David king. For David was a young man and Saul was very strong. So Samuel said good-bye to David and told him to remember that God had chosen him to do something great and good for the Children of Israel. Then Samuel went back to his own home. But David grew stronger and wiser every day, and thought of the time that was coming when he should be a great man among his people and do great deeds for them.

All this time King Saul grew worse and worse. After Samuel had gone away from Saul, and had told him that God would not be with him any more, be-

cause he was so proud and because he would not do what God wanted him to do, Saul was very angry. And such a bad spirit came to Saul that sometimes it made him crazy.

Years and years ago, in the time when Saul lived, people thought that everything that happened came from spirits. So when sometimes they saw Saul looking sad when there was no reason for him to be sad, or when Saul would throw things at people just because he was angry, people said that God had sent a wicked spirit to trouble Saul. In these days if a man does queer things like that, what do we say? We say he is crazy.

Well, that was the way it was with Saul. Sometimes he would be so sad that he could not eat. He would sit in his tent, all in the dark, and would not let anyone come near him. No one could tell what the matter was, and no one could do anything to help him. Then sometimes, when nothing at all had happened, Saul would suddenly be so very angry that he would throw his spear at someone and try to kill him. And then people would be afraid to be near Saul, for they never knew when Saul might try to kill them. And all of Sauls servants wondered what they could do for Saul, to drive away the wicked spirit.

At last one of them came to Saul and said: "See now, there is an evil spirit troubling you, and you must be cured. I will tell you what you can do. Send for some one who knows how to make music on the harp. Then when the wicked spirit comes again, and troubles you, the man you send for shall play music to you, and you will be well again."

Then Saul said to his servants: "Get me a young man who can play well, for I do not know whom to choose."

One of the servants answered: "There is a young man who lives in Bethlehem, David the son of Jesse. He keeps the sheep for his father, but sometimes when he is out in the fields with the sheep, he plays on a harp. He is a very fine player. And he is a beautiful young man, good to look upon. Let us send for him to come and play for the king and see if he cannot drive away the evil spirit."

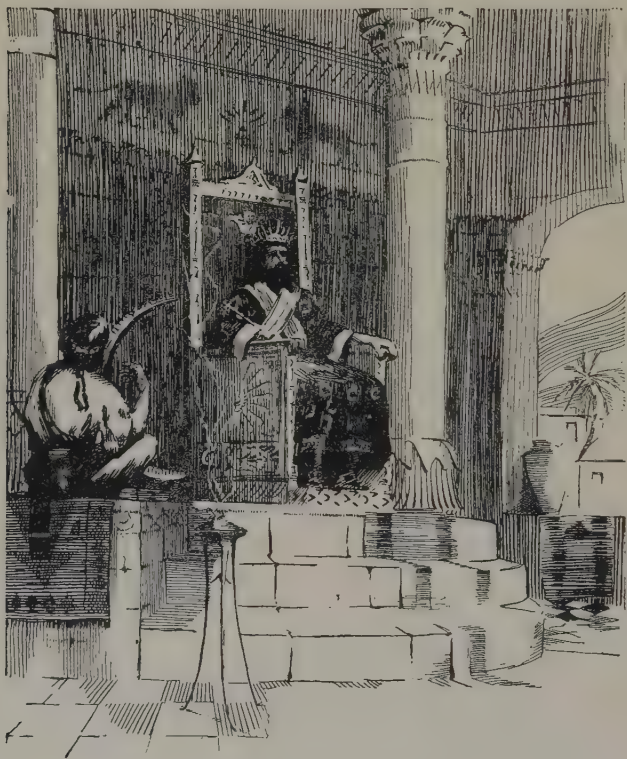
So Saul sent a man to Jesse and said: "Send me your youngest son David to play on the harp for me."

Jesse was glad that so great a thing should come to his family, that the king himself should want his youngest son to come to the palace and play the harp. So Jesse took an ass, and put bread and meat on it, and a bottle of wine, and sent it with David for a present to Saul, and said to David: "Tell the king that I pray that God may take away the evil spirit quickly."

David took his harp and the ass with the bread and meat and wine, and went over the hot sand of the desert country till he came to the place where Saul lived. And one of Saul's servants came out to meet him. And the servant said: "O David, since the time when Saul sent for you, we have taken neither food nor drink, for we are afraid of what will happen to the king. For three days and three nights he has stayed in his tent and no one is allowed to come near him. We have heard no sounds coming out from the tent and we know not whether the king is still alive

or whether the evil spirit has killed him. Go in to him quickly and play sweet music."

So David took his harp on his shoulder and went to the tent where Saul was. He knelt and prayed



DAVID PLAYING FOR KING SAUL.

to God that he might be wise enough to play music that would drive away the bad spirit and make Saul well again. Then he opened the curtains and went in and called: "King Saul." But there was no answer from the darkness within.

It was all black inside the tent, for the curtains were all down. David had been out in the bright sun and at first he could not see, but soon he began to get sight of Saul, sitting on the ground in the middle of the tent. His teeth were set together and his eyes were staring. He looked as if he did not care whether he lived or died.

Would you have been afraid if you had seen a crazy man looking the way King Saul looked? David was not afraid. He took out his harp and played beautiful music. He was sorry for poor King Saul, for David had a kind heart.

So he played the tunes he used to play to his sheep, and while he played he sang. He told about the wild desert and the stars that shine at night, and about the pleasant time that the shepherds have together. Then he played the tunes that the men sing when they gather in the grain at the end of the year. He played the most beautiful music he knew, and after a while Saul began to move a little.

Still David was not afraid. He played on and on, all the loveliest tunes there were. So after a while, Saul got up and moved around the tent, for the wicked spirit was gone and Saul was not crazy any more for some time.

Then David went back home to his father Jesse. But whenever King Saul was crazy, his servants always sent for David to come and play sweet music. And that was how it was that David came to the king's palace. But it was many years before David became king himself. And that will have to be told in another story.

QUESTIONS

Was Saul always a good king after Samuel had chosen him?

What did he do that was not right?

What did God tell Samuel to do?

Where was Samuel to find a new king?

When Samuel came down to Bethlehem what did he do?

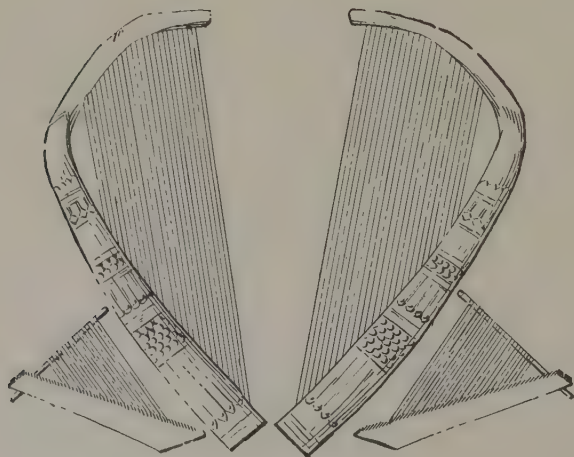
Why did he not choose the oldest son?

Which son did he choose?

What did he do to David as a sign that he was chosen to be great?

Why did David go up to see King Saul?

What did he do for King Saul?



THE TWENTY-FIFTH STORY

DAVID AND THE GIANT



GIANTS are great, tall, strong men; and some of them are wicked. Do you want to hear a story about a boy who fought a giant and conquered him?

Once upon a time, in the days when Saul was still king over the Children of Israel, there was a great fight between the Children of Israel and the Philistines. The Children of Israel were always fighting the Philistines. Sometimes the Children of Israel beat and sometimes the Philistines beat.

One day Jesse called his youngest son David to come in from the field where he was taking care of the sheep. And he said to David: "Your oldest brothers have gone with Saul the king to fight the Philistines. Take now some bread and some cooked foods and carry them quickly to the camp for a present to your brothers and see how the fight is going."

David arose quickly, for he wanted to go to the camp and see the fight. He took the bread and the cooked food and went to the place where the Children of Israel were staying and found his brothers. The Children of Israel were on one hill, and the Philistines were on another hill and there was a valley between.

While David was talking to his brothers, he heard a great shout, and there came out a giant on the hill of the Philistines. He was taller than any other man David had ever seen, and he had heavy brass armor on his legs and heavy brass armor on his body, and he wore a helmet of brass on his head. Do you know what a helmet is? It is a large head-covering that no sword can cut through, and men used to wear them when they went out to fight.

This great giant stood up on the hill that belonged to the Philistines and he called out: "Who are you, that you think you can fight us? Look at me and see what kind of men the Philistines are. And now choose a man from all the Children of Israel and let him come out and fight. If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will all be your servants, but if I kill him, then you shall be our servants and do what we tell you to do."

David saw that all the Children of Israel were afraid, and not one of them would go out to fight the giant. And David said: "Who is this giant, and why is everyone afraid of him?"

The people answered: "How is it that you have not heard of him? Every day he comes here and calls out to us. He calls us all kinds of names because there is no one great enough to fight him. For he is a terrible giant. And the king has promised that if any man will kill him, he shall marry the king's daughter and his father's family shall be made great among the people of Israel."

And all this time the giant was calling: "Are you all afraid, you Children of Israel? Send me a man,

so that we can fight together." But Saul and all of the people were afraid.

Then David said: "This is a terrible thing, that a man should speak to the Children of Israel and that no one should be brave enough to fight him." But when David's oldest brother heard this, he was very angry. And he said to David: "What are you doing down here in a camp of soldiers? You are only a boy. What has become of those little sheep you used to take care of? Or perhaps you think you would like to fight the giant yourself?"

David said: "If no one else will fight him, I will go."

Then his brother laughed at him. But the men who stood near ran and told King Saul and said: "There is a boy here who says that he will go and fight with the giant." And Saul said: "Let him come here to me."

When Saul saw David, he said to him: "Thou art not able to go against this giant to fight him, for thou art but a youth, and he is a great man of war." Then David told this story.

"O, King," said David, "it is true that he is a great man of war and that I am only a youth. But I have been a shepherd boy and I have kept my father's sheep. In the daytime I drive them from place to place, and look for green grass which they may eat and for good water which they may drink. For the desert land is very hot and very dry and the sheep need a great deal of water.

"So by day I must travel a long way through rough country where there is no one to take care of me. And

I meet many bad men who would like to steal my sheep away from me. And even if I am only a boy, I have learned to take care of my sheep.

"And at night, when the sun has gone down, I camp on the side of a hill or on the low land of the desert. The great white stars come out and shine down very brightly and I am all alone with my sheep and with God. And then I must learn to be very brave, for I must take care of my sheep and keep them from the wild animals that go through the land at night.

"But because I have lived so long in the open air and because I have worked so hard, I have grown to be very strong, even if I am only a boy. For one night when the stars were shining brightly, a bear came out of the desert and crept around the sheep. Then I saw the bear and I did not know what to do, for he was very large and very fierce.

"And I thought: 'Perhaps he will go away and leave me alone.' So I waited and watched. But after a while he took a little lamb out of the flock and started off with it to the desert. Then the mother sheep began to make a sorrowful sound because her little lamb was taken.

"Then I knew what I must do. For I was there to take care of the sheep. And even if the bear was very large and fierce, I had to take care of them. So I went after the bear and struck him and killed him and took the lamb away. And God gave me strength to kill the bear and to save my lamb. So now, O king, he will surely give me strength to kill this wicked giant."

Saul looked at David and thought: "He is very

strong and brave, but after all he is only a youth. It may have just happened that he killed the bear."

Then David told King Saul another story. And he said: "O King, there was another night when I was keeping the sheep in the desert. It was very dark and the stars were not shining. And I could not see where all of the sheep were because it was so dark.

"But while I was watching, all of a sudden I heard a growl. At first it was low and soft and far away. Then it grew louder and louder and came very near, and I knew it was—a lion. And the lion was after my sheep.

"I heard the lion walking around in the dark with heavy steps. And all of a sudden I heard the lion roar a loud roar, and I heard the sheep make a terrible noise in the dark. Then I knew what I had to do, for the lion had stolen one of the lambs, and I had to take care of it.

"So I went after the lion in the dark night, and I struck him with my stick and took the lamb away. Then the lion roared again for he was very hungry, and he came after me to eat me up. But I turned and took the lion by his long bushy mane, and I struck him with a club until he died.

"And if God has given me strength to kill a bear and a lion, surely He will help me to kill this giant, who is calling out to the Children of Israel. For I have learned, O King, that a boy can do whatever he has to do, even if he is only a boy. For God will help him and give him strength."

Saul said to David: "You shall go against this giant. Put on my armor, and put my helmet of

brass on your head and my coat of brass on your body. For you shall wear the king's own armor."

David put on the king's own armor to go against the giant. He put a helmet on his head and a heavy coat of mail around his body, and he took a sword and shield. But when David tried to walk with all that heavy armor, he found that he could not move about very easily. For he was not used to it.

David said: "O King, let me go to fight the giant with the sling that I know how to use, for I have never learned to fight in armor."

And the King said: "You shall fight in any way you choose." So David went out from King Saul with only his sling and a little leather bag to carry things in.

Then he went down to the brook that ran between the two hills. And there he picked up some little, round, smooth stones. And all the Children of Israel looked at him and wondered what he wanted with them. David put the stones in the shepherd's bag that he carried, and he took his sling in his hand, and went over the brook to meet the giant.

Do you know what a sling-shot is? Of course you do, but perhaps you do not know that there are different kinds of sling-shots. Some of them are just to play with, but some of them are stronger and are used to kill wild animals with. This was the kind that David had.

When the giant saw David coming against him, he laughed. David was just a boy with red cheeks and curly hair and he did not look as if he had ever seen a battle. The giant stood up in his coat of brass and

his helmet of brass, and his leg-coverings of brass, with his long spear in his hand and his sword at his side. He thought David looked very funny, coming to fight him. So he laughed and said: "Am I a little dog, that you are coming out to fight me with a sling and a bag of stones?"

But David came straight on. Then the giant said to David: "Come over here to me, and I will kill you and give your body to the birds to eat and to all the wild animals that prowl around at night."

Then David said to the giant: "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a coat of brass; but I come to thee in the name of the God of Israel against whom you are fighting. And God will give you to me this day. And I will kill you and will cut off your head. And I will give your dead body and the bodies of all the Philistines today to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts that prowl around at night. Then all the people will know that God is a strong God and that He gives the battle wherever He chooses, whether the men who fight be weak or strong."

The giant came near to David and drew his long spear to throw it. And David ran towards the giant. For David was not afraid.

But before the giant came near enough to throw his spear, David put his hand in his bag and pulled out a smooth stone. When the giant saw the little stone he just stood still and laughed. But the next minute he was not laughing at David any more, for what do you think happened?

David put the round, smooth stone in his sling, and

he slung it, and it hit the giant right in the middle of the forehead, and the giant fell on the ground with his face to the earth. So David killed the giant with only a sling and a little stone and without a sword or spear.

And David ran and took the sword of the giant, that lay on the ground, and he drew it and cut off the giant's head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they turned and ran.

Then the Children of Israel shouted a battle-cry and went after the Philistines and drove them a long way off and killed them. And after they had killed them and driven them away, they came back to the camp the Philistines had left and took all the things they wanted out of it, all the brass and the swords and the spears and the clothes that belonged to the Philistines. But David took the head of the giant and his spear and his sword and all of his brass armor and hung them up in his tent.

Saul sent for David and said: "You shall be a great man in my army and shall have many soldiers under you. For I see that you are a brave man, and strong, and that God is with you."

So Saul loved David. But it was not long before something happened which was going to change Saul's love for David into hate. All of the soldiers of Saul went back with him to the city, and David was with them. Then the women of Israel were very glad because their men had beaten the Philistines, and they made a great procession. They came out to meet Saul and they sang a song to welcome the soldiers.

And this was the song they sang: "Saul hath slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." They all sang and danced and shouted and played all kinds of music.

Saul was very angry, for he said: "They say that I have killed thousands, but they say that David has killed ten thousands. They say that he is a greater fighter than even I am. The next thing they will do will be to make him king." And Saul remembered the words that Samuel had said to him, that God would not have him for king very much longer, and Saul was afraid of David and hated him.

So from that time on Saul tried to kill David because he knew that David was a better man and a braver fighter than he was, and because he was afraid that David would be king instead of him.

QUESTIONS

How did David happen to go up to the battle?

What did he hear when he was there?

What did David say about the giant?

What did David's brother think of him?

What did King Saul say when he heard that David wanted to fight the giant?

What two stories did David tell to show that God had helped him, and that he could fight the giant?

What did Saul give him to help him fight?

Why would not David use the king's own armor?

What did David kill the giant with?

What happened after the giant was dead?

What song did they sing when David came back to town?

THE TWENTY-SIXTH STORY

THE STORY OF TWO FRIENDS



FRIENDSHIP is one of the great blessings of life. This is the story of two friends.

Once upon a time there were two friends. Do you know any boys who are very great friends, so great that nothing can make them quarrel with each other?

Well, these two boys were the greatest friends there have ever been in all the world. Their names were David and Jonathan.

You remember David, who killed the giant, and who was so great in fighting that even King Saul was afraid of him and wanted to kill him. And you remember Jonathan, who fought the Philistines with only his armor-bearer to help him? Jonathan was King Saul's own son and he loved David.

And this was the way it happened. After David killed the giant and came back to the city, all the people went out to meet him. Do you remember what they sang?

“Saul has killed his thousands,
But David his ten thousands.”

When Saul heard those words, you know how angry they made him. But when Jonathan heard

them, he said: "Who is this brave young man who has fought so well for my father? If all the Children of Israel were as brave as he, we should soon kill all



DAVID AND JONATHAN

the Philistines. I should like to know this young man who has killed the giant."

Jonathan loved David because he was a brave young man. And Jonathan took David out in the field and said: "Let us swear friendship together. Whatever is mine is yours, and whatever is yours is

mine. Whoever hates you hates me, and whoever is your friend is my friend. In everything we shall be like brothers together." So they swore friendship.

Then Jonathan said: "For a sign of our friendship and to show that everything we have belongs together, I will give you my clothes and I will take your clothes." For this was the way they used to do in those days whenever two young men swore fast friendship together.

So Jonathan took off his clothes and gave them to David as a sign that they were friends forever. He gave David his sword, and his shield, and his bow and arrow, and everything that he wore to battle.

All this time Jonathan did not know that his father Saul hated David. He thought that surely King Saul would love anyone who killed so many Philistines.

Saul made David a great captain, because all the people loved him. But Saul thought: "When David goes out to fight the Philistines, they will kill him, and then I will be rid of him." But David went out to fight the Philistines and killed a great many of them, and they never did anything to him. So Saul was all the more angry with David.

One day the evil spirit came to King Saul. You remember how Saul used to get crazy sometimes, and everyone said it was an evil spirit. You remember how David used to play to him? This time David took his harp and went to play to King Saul, to drive the evil spirit away.

But when Saul saw David all alone with him, and no one around to see, he picked up his spear and threw it at David. For he thought: "I will run my spear

through David and kill him." But David stepped aside and the spear just missed him.

Then David said to himself: "It is because King Saul is crazy. He did not really want to kill me." So David stayed in the palace the same as before. And the next time that Saul was crazy, David went in again to play to him. Do you not think that David was brave?

This time the same thing happened. Saul picked up his spear and threw it at David, for he thought: "Surely this time I will not miss him." But David stepped aside and the spear hit the wall and stuck there.

Then Saul was afraid and he said: "Surely God is with David and not with me. It is God who keeps me from killing David. And it is God who will make David king some day." But still Saul hated David and wanted a chance to kill him.

All this time Jonathan loved David. Jonathan did not believe that his father Saul really hated his friend. He thought it was only when Saul was crazy that he tried to hurt David. But after a while word came to Jonathan saying: "Your father is trying all the time to kill David."

Then Jonathan said to David: "I do not believe that my father wishes to kill you. But go and hide in a field and I will bring my father out and talk to him about you, and I will find out whether he hates you or not."

So David went and hid in a field and Jonathan went in to see King Saul. And Jonathan said: "O my father, why are you angry with David? He has

never done anything against you, but he has fought battles for you and killed your enemies. He is a strong man and he wishes to serve you well. Make him your friend and do not try to kill him."

Then Saul listened to what Jonathan said, and answered: "You speak the truth. David is a brave man and a good man. I will not kill him." So Jonathan made peace between David and Saul. And David came back to live in the king's palace.

After a while there was another war, and David went out to fight. He fought very bravely and he killed a great many of the Philistines. Should you not think that would make Saul like David? But Saul only said: "David will be a greater man than I am. I must kill him."

Then David came to Jonathan his friend and said: "What have I done? How have I wronged your father, for he is trying again to kill me?"

But Jonathan answered: "Far from it; my father will not kill you. My father tells me everything that he does, and he has not told me this. I do not believe that he would try to kill you."

David said: "Your father knows well that you are my friend. That is why he does not tell you. He does not wish you to feel sad, because you are his son, but it is very true that there is only a little step between me and death."

Jonathan replied: "I know what we can do. You must hide yourself in the field that we both know about, and stay there till I have talked with my father. And about this time tomorrow, or the third day, when I have asked my father about you, I will

come out to the field with a boy and with my bow and arrows. For it may be that if my father is really trying to kill you, it would not be safe for you to come out and talk with me.

“Then I will shoot arrows over the field. And this shall be the sign between us. When I send the little boy to pick up the arrows, if I call out to him, ‘Come this way, for the arrow is on this side of you,’ then it will be a sign that you are safe and you can come back. But if I call out, ‘The arrow is on the other side of you, hurry and go the other way,’ then that means that you must go the other way, because my father wishes to kill you. And if no one is near to watch I will speak to you and say good-bye, but if I cannot speak to you this shall be our sign.”

Jonathan went back home to his father and David hid in the field. And Saul, the king, was giving a feast, and David was invited. For Saul thought that if David came to the feast, he could take him and put him in prison and kill him. But when all the people sat down to eat, David was not there.

Saul said to Jonathan: “Where is your friend David?” And this was just the chance Jonathan was waiting for, so he answered Saul: “David told me that he could not come.”

Saul was very angry and spoke roughly to Jonathan and said: “You are a bad son to me. Do I not know that you have chosen this David for your friend when you know that I hate him? And you yourself can never be king in peace until David is dead. How can you love a man who will keep you from being king? So now, send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die.”

Jonathan thought to himself: "Surely my father will not do this wicked thing, if I ask him not to." So he said to the king: "Why do you wish to kill David? He has never done you any harm, but he has fought bravely among your soldiers."

Saul was so angry that he picked up his spear and threw it at his own son Jonathan. He wanted to kill his own son because his son was a friend of David. Then Jonathan knew that his father's heart was full of hate, and that he really wished to kill David.

Jonathan rose up from the feast and went out of the room. He would not eat any food all that day, because he was so sad. For he knew that now David must go away and that he could never see his friend again. Jonathan was very sorrowful because it was his own father whose heart was so full of hate.

Early the next morning Jonathan arose and said: "I am going out to shoot with my bow and arrow." He took a little servant boy with him to pick up the arrows. He came to the field where David was hiding and he began shooting.

The little boy ran out to get the arrow and Jonathan called out to him: "The arrow is on the other side of you. You must go away from me." And David knew that that was the sign and that Jonathan meant that he must go away. And Jonathan called after the boy: "Hasten and do not wait so long." So David knew that the danger was great, and that he would have to go quickly.

But still Jonathan waited in the field. He had given the sign to David, but he hoped and hoped that there would be a chance for him to say good-bye. So after

a while, when he saw that there was no one in sight, Jonathan gave the bow and arrows to the little boy, and said: "Take them back home." So the little boy went back to the town with the bow and arrows as he was told.

David arose out of the place where he was hiding and came to Jonathan. And Jonathan and David kissed each other and wept for a long time. For they knew that they would never see each other again.

At last Jonathan said to David: "Have we not sworn friendship to each other? Then whatever happens we shall still be friends, even if we never meet again. God will keep watch between us and will care for both of us, and there shall be friendship between you and me and between your children and my children forever."

So David went away from Jonathan. And Jonathan went back home to his father. But years and years afterwards, when Saul and Jonathan were both killed in a great battle, and David was king, he made a beautiful funeral song about Jonathan and about what a good friend he was, and about how sorry he was that Jonathan was dead. This is part of the song:

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle!
Jonathan is slain upon the high places.
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan,
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me,
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen
And the weapons of war perished!"

QUESTIONS

Who were two of the greatest friends that there ever were?

Why did Jonathan love David?

Why did King Saul hate David?

How did Saul try twice to kill David?

Would Jonathan believe that his own father wanted to kill David?

What did he do to find out?

How did Jonathan make his father friendly toward David?

Did Saul keep on being friendly with David?

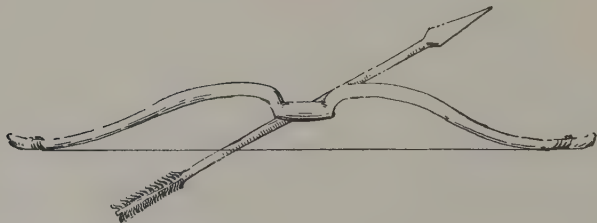
What did Jonathan do the second time?

What did Saul do to Jonathan when he said that David was a brave young man?

How did Jonathan let David know what Saul had done?

Did David love Jonathan always?

What did David do when Jonathan died?



THE TWENTY-SEVENTH STORY

AN UNGRATEFUL SON



WICKED son is the cause of great sorrow.

David, the king, had many sons. Some of them were bad boys and some of them were good. But there was one son whom David loved very dearly and he was the most beautiful boy in all the land of Israel. But his heart was not as beautiful as his body was. He was a bad son. His name was Absalom.

Absalom was tall and very handsome. He had the most beautiful hair that any one in all the land of Israel had ever had. It grew so fast that every year he had to cut it, because it was too heavy for him. Every year when he cut his long hair off, there were many pounds of it.

Absalom was very vain. He bought for himself a beautiful chariot with fine horses, and he had fifty men to run before him. Every day he drove his chariot through the city, and the fifty men ran before him and shouted: "Here comes Absalom!" Then everyone would turn and look at Absalom and say how good-looking he was.

There was another thing that Absalom did that

was even worse. When people came up to King David to have their quarrels settled, the king always did what seemed to him the best thing. But of course not everyone was pleased. So when the men who were not pleased went out of the city, they found Absalom standing by the gate.

And Absalom said to them: "If I were king instead of my father, I would take care that you got everything you wanted." So after a while, some of the Children of Israel began to wish that Absalom could be king instead of David.

Then when any poor man came to Absalom and began to bow before him, because Absalom was such a great man and the king's son, Absalom would take the poor man by the hand and kiss him, and say to him: "Why do you bow to me? You shall be my friend and not my servant." So the poor men of Israel thought: "How fine it would be to have a king who would treat me like his best friend!"

All this that Absalom did he was doing just for one thing—to get the people to want him for king instead of his father. This was a very bad thing for him to do, was it not, when his father loved him so much and had always been kind to him?

After a while Absalom thought to himself: "I have many people now who wish me for their king. It is time for me to get an army and fight my father. So Absalom said to King David: "Let me go up to the holy place to make a sacrifice that I promised to God."

Then David was pleased because Absalom was going to make a sacrifice to God, for he thought: "Surely now Absalom will become a better son than

he has been." So David said to Absalom: "Go up to the holy place to make your sacrifice."

But Absalom sent men all through the land to say: "As soon as you hear a trumpet blow, arise and shout: 'Absalom is king!'" And Absalom invited two hundred men to go with him to the holy place.

Then there came a messenger to King David saying: "All the men of Israel are going after Absalom, and he will make himself king." And before King David had time to think what he would do, the trumpets went all through the land, and the people arose and shouted, "Absalom is king!"

There were a great many people who did not want Absalom for king, but they were so surprised that they did not know what to do, so they just kept still. And poor old King David did not hear anyone shouting for him.

Absalom and his soldiers marched against King David and David said to his servants: "Let us arise and go away over the river, and if any of the men of Israel are on our side, they will come after us, but if no one comes we will be safe from Absalom, for we can hide in the desert. For Absalom is coming after us quickly and he will bring down evil upon us."

The king's faithful servants said: "We will go wherever the king commands." For the servants loved King David, and they were very sorry that the king's own son was fighting him.

So David went away from his palace and from his city. He went over the river and hid from Absalom. And David was very sad because he was driven out from his city and from his home, but he was still

sadder because Absalom his son had turned against him and was fighting him. So David wept as he went on his way. He covered his head and walked barefoot, and all the people who followed him covered their heads and wept, because King David was driven out from his city.

As soon as David had passed over the river, people began to come to him from all over the land. They remembered what a good king he had been and they knew that Absalom would not make a good king, in spite of all his promises. They thought that it was very wicked of Absalom to drive out his own father. So they all came after King David. And before long, David had brought together just as big an army as Absalom had.

Then David's captain came to David and said: "Let us go now and fight with Absalom, and get back the kingdom." But David answered: "Absalom is my son; I cannot fight him." So David and his men stayed in the desert.

The heart of Absalom grew more proud and he said to himself: "I will go out and fight my father David, and I will drive him farther away or else I will kill him. And then there will be no one left to say: 'We are sorry that King David is gone. Let us bring him back from the desert.'"

So Absalom took his army and went out against David. And when David heard that they were coming, he did not want to fight Absalom, because he loved his son, even if he had been very wicked. But the king's captain said to him: "It will never do for us to be driven farther away by Absalom. I will lead

the soldiers against Absalom's soldiers. You will not have to go out to fight yourself against your son."

David said to his captain: "Take the soldiers and lead them out to fight. But do not hurt Absalom.



DAVID WEEPING FOR ABSALOM.

Drive all of his soldiers away if you can, but do not kill my son."

The soldiers of David went out to fight the soldiers of Absalom. All day they fought, and thousands

and thousands of men were killed. But at the end of the day the soldiers of Absalom were all driven away. And the soldiers of David rode after them and killed them.

When Absalom was riding away on his mule, he went through a thick wood. He met some of David's servants there. So he turned and rode off as fast as he could go under the trees. He did not look to see where he was going, until all of a sudden, what do you think happened? He rode right under a thick tree and all his long hair got caught in the branches. Then the mule went on running and Absalom was left behind, all tangled in the branches by his hair.

Then one of David's servants went to the king's captain and said: "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree caught by his hair." And the king's captain answered: "Why did you not kill him?" But the servant said: "Because I know how David loves his son, and I heard him say that no one should kill Absalom."

The king's captain laughed: "Show me where he is. I will kill him, no matter what David says." So he went to the place where Absalom was. And he found that Absalom was still alive. Then the king's captain took three long knives and stuck them through Absalom's heart and killed him.

So that was the way that Absalom died. The beautiful hair that he had been so proud of was just the thing that helped to kill him. And all of Absalom's soldiers were scattered and killed, because they had helped a wicked son to fight his father.

When David heard that Absalom was dead, he forgot all of the wicked things that Absalom had done.

He forgot that his captain had got back his kingdom for him, and that now he could go to his own home and his own city and be king again. He just remembered that his own son Absalom, whom he had always loved, was dead.

So David the king went into his tent and wept, and as he wept he said: "Oh my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son." All of the riches and all of the kingdoms there are in all of the world cannot make a father happy when he has a wicked son.

QUESTIONS

Who was the bad son of David?

What was Absalom proud of?

What did he do to get people to want him to be king?

What did all the people shout when the trumpets blew?

Where did King David have to go?

Did many people come out after David?

What did David tell his soldiers to do with Absalom?

What happened to Absalom's soldiers?

What happened to Absalom?

What did David do when he heard that Absalom was dead?

How do fathers feel when they have bad boys?

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH STORY

A WISE CHOICE



SOMETIMES young people who have decisions to make choose unwisely; but not always. This is a story of a boy who made a wise choice.

You have heard many stories about the man who was given one wish, so that whatever he wished could come true; and you remember what very foolish things he sometimes asked for. This is a story about a young man who had just one wish, and who wished for a very good thing, a wish that he never wanted to change as long as he lived.

When King David was a very old man, and knew that he could not live much longer on the earth, all the men of his kingdom came to him and said: "Choose us a king, to rule after you are dead. Which one of all your sons do you want for king?"

Then David said: "There is one of my sons whom I love better than any. He is good and he loves God and he will make the best king."

Then all the chief men of Israel said: "Which one is it?" And King David said: "My son Solomon."

The chief men said: "It would be a good thing to make him king now before you die, so that none of

the other sons can come when you are dead and say: 'My father meant me to be king.' For then we shall have a war. And besides, O King, you are old and tired with all the work that a king must do; let Solomon begin to learn the work of a king."

So David said to the chief men: "Take with you my own chief servants, and put Solomon on my own mule, and ride with him to the holy place, and there let the priest make him king over all the people. And then blow a trumpet and shout: 'Long live King Solomon.' Then bring him back, and he shall come and sit on my throne, for I have named him to be king in my stead."

So they put Solomon on the king's own mule and took him up to the holy place and the priest made a sacrifice to God and brought out the horn full of holy oil and poured it on Solomon's head. And so he was king over the Children of Israel. Then Solomon rode back to David his father and sat on the king's throne, and all the people cheered and made a great noise and they all shouted: "Long live King Solomon."

The servants of King David came into his room and said: "O King, you have been very great and your name has been known all over the strange lands; but may God make the name of your son a greater name than yours, and may his kingdom also be greater."

King David bowed his head and said: "May God make Solomon a great and wise king."

Now the days of David drew near when he should die, and he called Solomon, his son, to him and said:

"I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man, and keep the laws of God. For if you love God and keep His laws, the kingdom will grow greater and greater, but if you do not love God and do not keep His laws, the kingdom will grow less and less, until it is all broken in pieces and the Children of Israel are made slaves again."

And Solomon answered his father: "I will remember to love God and to keep His laws."

King David called together his chief men and said to them: "For many years I have had one great wish. Even when I was a young man I desired it. I wanted to build a great and beautiful temple for the house of God. The temple that we have now is old, and it is not made of stone and marble, the way I think that it should be.

"But years ago, when I spoke to the man of God and said: 'Let me build a great and beautiful house where men may come and worship God, and where all the holy things shall be kept,' the man of God said to me, 'You shall not build the house of God.'

"Then I said: 'Why should I not build the house of God?' And he answered me: 'Because you are a man of war.' I knew from this that the land had many enemies to fight and that there must be many battles and many men killed before the land would be safe enough to build a house of God in.

"I said to the man of God: 'I am indeed a man of war, and there are many people whom the Children of Israel must fight. So I will lead them out to battle until we have conquered all the land, and made peace.

For fighting is the thing that I know best. But when my son comes after me, he shall be a man of peace. He shall not have to fight any more, for all his enemies will be dead by that time, and the land will be safe. So let my son build the house of God that I wanted to build.'

"The man of God answered: 'It shall be as you say. Your son that comes after you shall build the house of God that you wanted to build. And all the land shall be at peace.'

"So now, O men of Israel, let these words of the man of God come true, and help my son Solomon to build a beautiful house of God, of stone and marble and gold and precious jewels. It shall be the most beautiful temple that was ever built."

All the Children of Israel shouted and said: "We will help Solomon." So David called together his servants and sent them to gather precious things. They cut stones for the sides of the house, and they got iron ready for the nails, and they brought beautiful cedar trees and plenty of brass and all that was necessary to build the temple.

For David said: "Solomon, my son, is very young, and the house that is to be built for God must be of great beauty and magnificence, so that all lands shall hear of its glory. So I will get many things ready before I die."

The time came when David must die and he sent for Solomon his son and said: "See, my son Solomon, I am leaving a great kingdom for you, and a great work that you must do. For you must build the most beautiful house for God that has ever been built in all

the world. I have gathered together the brass, and the stone, and the iron, and the gold, but you must build it. You will need great wisdom. Learn to know God and to love Him and He will show you what is best to do." Then David died and all the Children of Israel wept for him.

But King Solomon went up to the holy place to make a sacrifice to God and to pray. For he thought: "I am only a young king, and I do not know what is best. I will ask God to help me."

So he made his sacrifice at the holy place and afterwards he lay down and fell asleep. Then Solomon dreamed a dream. And God appeared to him in his dream and said: "King Solomon, ask whatever you will and I will give it to you. One wish you can have, the thing that you want most of all."

Solomon wondered what he should wish. His father David had been a great fighter and had killed all his enemies, and Solomon thought: "Shall I ask to be a great fighter and kill all my enemies?" But then he remembered that he was to be a man of peace, and that he was to build the house of God.

Then Solomon thought: "Shall I wish for great riches and plenty of silver and gold, so that I can make the most wonderful house of God there ever was, and have plenty of money left over for myself?" Solomon knew that that would be very fine, to be the richest king in the world.

But then Solomon thought: "What good would all these riches do me, if I should die soon, and not have time to build the house of God or to enjoy my riches? Suppose I wish for a long life, so that I can grow to

be very old and do a great deal of work for my kingdom, and have a great deal of happiness?" And it seemed a very fine thing to have a long life.

But Solomon thought: "What good would a long



THE WISE CHOICE OF SOLOMON.

life do to anyone if it was not a good life? So now, I am a very young king, and have not learned how to rule and do great deeds. I will ask God to make me wise."

So Solomon answered God and said: "O God, thou hast been kind to my father David and given him a great kingdom. And now, thou hast chosen me to be king, and I am only a child and do not know how to rule. For the Children of Israel are a very great people, and need a wise king. So now, I pray thee, give me a heart full of wisdom, that I may know how to be a good king and how to do all the work that a king should do."

God was pleased with Solomon's wish. And God said to Solomon: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked riches, nor a long life, nor to kill all your enemies, but have asked instead to have a wise heart, I will give you your wish. You shall be the wisest king that the land has ever had, and all the world shall hear of your wisdom. And besides this I will give you all the things you did not ask. You shall have great riches and be known through all the world, and if you love me and obey my laws as David did, then I will give you a long life."

Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream. And he came back from the holy place to his home and made a feast to all his servants. But all the things that God had promised him in his dream came true. He was known all over the world because he was so wise and so great. And he lived long and built the most beautiful house of God that had ever been built, all of gold and stone and precious jewels and cedar wood.

QUESTIONS

Whom did David choose to be king in his stead?

What did they do at the holy place to show that Solomon was king?

What did David tell Solomon would make his kingdom great?

What did David want his son Solomon to build?

Why did not David build it himself?

Where did Solomon go when David died?

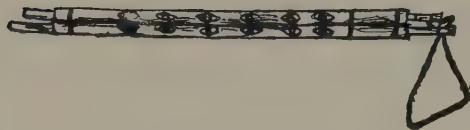
What dream did he have?

What things did Solomon think he would wish for?

What did he wish for at last?

What would you wish for if you had one wish?

What else did God give Solomon beside wisdom?



THE TWENTY-NINTH STORY

REHOBOAM AND JEROBOAM



REMEMBER that older people know something worth learning. Vanity and stubbornness have caused many boys to do what later they regretted.

When King Solomon had ruled for many years and the time came for him to die, his son was made king instead. You remember King Solomon and how wise he was when he was made king. You remember how God gave him one wish and that he chose to be a wise king so that he could tell his people what it was best to do.

For a long time everything went well with Solomon. He grew rich and great, and all over the world people heard of how rich and great and wise he was, and came to see him. He built a beautiful house of God, the most beautiful that was ever built. It was made of heavy stone, and the roof was of precious cedar-wood. The insides of the walls were all covered with cedar-wood and with gold, and the floor was of beautiful wood covered over with gold. All of the things in the temple were made of gold and very beautiful wood.

All of these things Solomon did. But after a while.

when he saw how many people came to see him, Solomon grew proud. He forgot that it was God who had made him wise enough to do all these wonderful things, and he began to say to himself: "What a great man I am!"

So he built himself a beautiful palace and he married a great many wives, and built palaces for them. And some of the wives were heathen wives and had idol gods of wood and stone. Solomon wanted to please his wives, so he made houses for these idol gods too. The richer he grew, and the greater he grew, the more he forgot God.

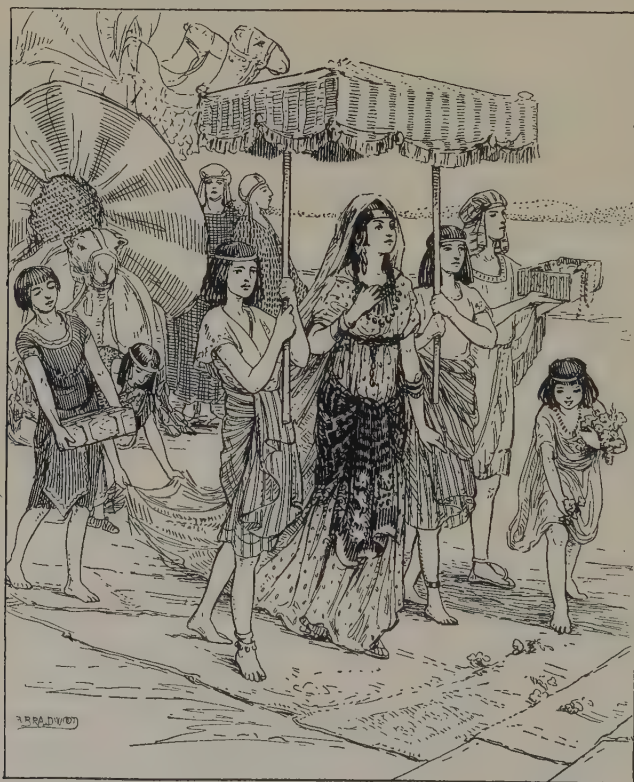
Solomon had a little son whose name was Rehoboam. He grew up in the king's palace, where everything was made of gold and silver and precious stones. And sometimes Rehoboam's mother would take him to see his father sitting on a great, white, ivory throne, with all the people bowing before him.

Then Rehoboam grew very proud and said: "What a great man my father is! And I am his son. Some day I will be as great as he."

One day, when Rehoboam was a little boy, a great queen came to visit his father Solomon. Rehoboam watched the queen with all her soldiers, and her servants, and her waiting-maids. She came to see Solomon, because she had heard how great he was. And she brought presents of gold and silver and precious stones to give to Solomon.

Then Rehoboam grew very proud and he almost wanted to call out to the queen: "Solomon is my father. Some day you will be bringing presents to me."

The queen went in to see Solomon and to give him the presents. But when she saw him sitting on his great white ivory throne, in the middle of the golden house that he had built, with hundreds of servants standing around, the queen bowed down to the earth



THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

and said: "It is true that Solomon is the greatest king in all the earth. He is so great and so rich that all of my presents are nothing to give to him."

Little Rehoboam thought to himself: "Some day

queens will be bowing to me. I will be a king." And he forgot that he had never done anything great. He grew so proud that all the boys he played with hated him. But they did not dare tell him so, for he was the king's son.

You see, there was one thing that Solomon did that was not very wise. It was not wise for him to let Rehoboam be such a proud and selfish boy. For that is what happens when a boy can do everything he wants, and have all the money he wants, and when none of the other boys dare tell him how mean and selfish he is. It is very bad for the boy. And it was very bad for Rehoboam.

Rehoboam grew up to think that all that other people were good for was just to please him. If one of the other boys did not treat him well, Rehoboam said: "When I am king I will kill you." And when any of the other boys asked for their share of things Rehoboam said: "Everything belongs to me, for I am going to be king. Everyone will have to be my slave and do just what I tell him to do."

When Rehoboam saw the poor people working very hard to build houses of gold and precious wood for his father Solomon, he never felt sorry for the poor people. He only said: "Everyone has to work for the king. When I am king, they will all have to work for me."

After a while King Solomon died. All of the people of Israel came up to the holy place to make Rehoboam king. Then a man of the people came to Rehoboam and said: "O King, when Solomon your father ruled us, for a long time he was wise and good.

But after a while he began to make the poor people work very hard, and he took away their money to get golden houses for himself, and he made them like slaves. But the Children of Israel are not slaves of any man. They are all free. So now, O King, be kinder to us than your father was, and do not make the poor people serve you without money. Then all the Children of Israel will love you, and you shall be a great king."

Rehoboam replied to the people: "Leave me alone for three days and then I will tell you what I will do." So they went away and left Rehoboam for three days.

Then Rehoboam called together all the old men who were great in the days of Solomon and he said to them: "The people say that I must be kinder to them than my father was, and that I must not give them so much work to do, and must not take away so much of their money. What do you think I should answer?"

The old men said: "O King, if you will be kind to the people this day, and give them what they ask, then they will love you always and do as you wish forever. For the people of Israel are a free people, and no man's slaves. The golden houses that your father built have made them very poor. Listen to the people, and do not take any more of their money for a time, and then they will love you."

But Rehoboam said to himself: "How stupid it would be not to have plenty of men working for me! What is the use of being king, if I have to do what the people wish?" So Rehoboam asked the young men, and said: "What answer shall I give the people?"

The young men had grown up in the palace with

Rehoboam, and they were proud and selfish just like the king. So they said: "What is the use of being king if you cannot do as you choose? Make the people work for you and give you plenty of money to spend. You are their king, and they must be your slaves and do what you tell them to do."

And the words of the young men pleased Rehoboam, and he said to himself: "I will do as they have told me."

When three days were over, the people came back to Rehoboam to know what he would do. And they asked him: "O King, will you promise us to be kinder to us than your father was, and not to take away so much of our money for your golden houses? If you will promise us this, we will love you and serve you always."

Then Rehoboam answered the people and said: "If my father took away your money, I will take away more. If my father worked you hard, I will work you harder. For I am king. You must do whatever I tell you to do. And you shall be my slaves. In everything that my father did, I will do more. My little finger shall be stronger than my father's whole body. And if my father punished you with little whips, I will punish you with big ones."

When the people heard these words, they cried out among themselves and said: "Why should we be the slaves of Rehoboam? He shall not be our king. For what good does it do us to have such a king?"

Then Rehoboam was very much afraid, for he saw that he was going to lose the great kingdom that Solomon his father had left. But he had already

spoken to the people and there was nothing now that he could do.

Then there arose a man named Jeroboam. He had been a servant of Solomon, but Solomon tried to kill him, and he fled away to the land of Egypt. Now he



YOUNG REHOBAM AT THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. came back to be with Rehoboam and to see if the young king would be better than his father. But when he knew what Rehoboam had said and what the people thought, he arose and cried: "To your tents, O Israel! Let us leave Rehoboam alone with his

friends and the men of his own tribe. For what use will Rehoboam be to us? To your tents, O Israel, and leave the king alone.”

So all of the Children of Israel rose up and went home to their tents. But Rehoboam sent his chief man after them, the man who made all the people work. And when he came to the tents of Israel, to ask the people to work for the king, all the Children of Israel lifted up great stones and threw them at him till he died.

This made Rehoboam afraid, for he knew he had lost the kingdom. So he made haste to get his chariot ready and he drove as fast as he could to Jerusalem. He was safe in Jerusalem, for that was where his own tribe lived.

Then the other tribes came together and chose Jeroboam to be their king, because he was the one who had told them to leave Rehoboam. And only his own tribe stayed with Rehoboam.

So Rehoboam lost the kingdom that his father left him, because he was proud and selfish and thought that other people were made to be his servants. And that was all because Rehoboam was spoiled when he was a boy.

* * *

You remember the story of Rehoboam, the foolish son of Solomon. You remember how the people came to him, and said to him: “Be kinder to us than your father was. Do not give us so much work to do, and do not take away our money.” Rehoboam had a chance to be a great king, and to make his people love him. But instead of being kind to the people, he said

to them: "If my father made you work hard, I will make you work harder."

So all the people said: "We will not have Rehoboam for king any more. We will choose our own king." Only the people who lived near Rehoboam stayed with him. The rest went off to the north and made another kingdom. Rehoboam was king over the southern kingdom, but he was not king over the northern kingdom. And forever after there were two kingdoms among the Children of Israel.

Do you remember the name of the man whom the Children of Israel chose to be king over the northern kingdom? His name was Jeroboam. At first all the people thought that he would be a good king. He did not make the people work hard, for he did not want to build a great house of God. So all of the people were happy.

Jeroboam had a little son whom he loved very dearly. He thought that some day his son would be king instead of him. So Jeroboam wanted to be sure that the people would never go back to Rehoboam, for if they did, there would be no kingdom left for his son.

What do you think was the best way to be sure that the people would want his son for their king? It was to make his son a good king, was it not? But, somehow or other, Jeroboam never thought of that. Those old kings never thought of making the people love them by being good to the people. They tried all kinds of other ways.

This was the way that Jeroboam tried. He looked around among his people and soon he saw something

that made him afraid. He saw that the Children of Israel went up to the city where Rehoboam lived whenever they wanted to pray to God and offer sacrifices. The house of God was in Rehoboam's city.

So Jeroboam said to himself: "What shall I do? If the people go to the city of Rehoboam and worship the same God that Rehoboam and his men worship, after a while they will all want to be in one kingdom again. Then I cannot be king any more, nor my son after me."

And Jeroboam thought for a long time, till at last he thought of a very foolish thing. For he said: "This is what I will do. I will make two golden calves here in my own country. And I will say to the people: 'It is too far for you to go to Rehoboam's city to pray to the God that Rehoboam prays to. See, I have made for you these golden calves. You can stay at home and pray to them and it will be easier for you.' Then all the people will stay here, and they will have gods of their own."

What do you suppose the people did when Jeroboam made these two golden calves? Do you suppose they would change their God just because Jeroboam told them to? Well, they did. They stopped going up to the house of God and they began praying to the golden calves that Jeroboam had made.

Then Jeroboam made a feast day, different from the feast-days that the people had always had. He thought: "If I give them different holidays from the holidays that they have in Rehoboam's kingdom, that will make it harder for them ever to have one kingdom again. So he made a new holiday, when all the people

should hold a feast in front of the golden calves. And they made sacrifices to the golden calves and prayed to them.

But when the man of God heard this, he was very angry. And he came to Jeroboam and said: "Because thou hast led away the people from God, and hast made them worship these golden calves, therefore thy kingdom shall not stand."

This made Jeroboam sorrowful, for the only thing he wanted was to make a strong kingdom and have his little son be king after him. He did not care to be good, or to love God, or to be a wise king for the people. He only cared about making a big kingdom and leaving it to his son. And that was just the thing the man of God said he could not do on account of his sin against God.

All the priests and the men of God left Jeroboam's kingdom and went to the kingdom of Rehoboam. For they did not want to make sacrifices to the golden calves. But Jeroboam laughed and said: "I will have priests of my own." So he made priests out of those who wanted to be priests, whether they were good priests or not.

Then Jeroboam said to himself: "See what a big kingdom I have made, and I will leave it to my little son." But just about the time he was saying this, what do you think happened? Jeroboam's little son fell very sick.

Jeroboam did not know what to do. He was afraid to go to the man of God, because he knew that he had done wrong when he made those golden calves, and the man of God was very angry. Jeroboam knew

that his own priests he had made were not really any good at all.

So at last Jeroboam said to his wife: "Arise, and dress thyself like a poor woman, so that thou be not known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to the man of God. And take with thee a present, ten loaves of bread, and cakes, and a bottle of honey, and he will tell thee what shall become of the child."

So the wife of Jeroboam arose and put on the clothes of a poor woman, and took the present for the man of God. She took ten loaves and some cakes, and a bottle of honey, and put them all in a basket to give to the man of God, if he would help her.

She went south and south for many days till she came to the land of Rehoboam and the town where the man of God lived. The sun was very hot at noon and the nights were very cold. And the wife of Jeroboam could not have her servants to take care of her, because no one must know who she was. So she was very tired when she reached the end of the journey.

But she did not care how tired she was, if only the man of God would do something for her son. So she went to his house and said: "Is the man of God here?"

The servants asked her: "What do you wish with the man of God?" And she answered: "I am a poor woman and my son is sick. I have brought a present to the man of God, so that he may tell me what to do for my son."

Then the servant came in to the man of God and told him: "There is a poor woman here who wishes to see you about her son." But God spoke to the man and said: "Rise up and go to the woman, for she is the

wife of Jeroboam, the king. She is pretending to be a poor woman. This is what thou shalt say to her."

So the man of God went to the door and said: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, why dost thou pretend to be another woman? I am sent to thee with evil news."

Then the wife of Jeroboam wept and said: "Tell me no evil news of the child, for I have come to ask help. What shall I do for the child, that he may live?"

But the man of God answered: "Go home and tell Jeroboam the word of God. God took him from among the common people, and made him prince over the land of Israel. God took the kingdom from Rehoboam and gave it to him. But he has not done right, for he has made golden calves for the people, and prayed to them, because he was selfish and wanted to keep the kingdom for himself and his son.

"Now this is the word of God. All of the house of Jeroboam shall die, and there shall not be left in the land of Israel one of them. And the kingdom shall be taken away from Jeroboam and his son forever. Arise, and go home to thine house, for by the time thou art come to thy city the child will be dying."

Then the wife of Jeroboam said: "O man of God, he is a little boy and has done no wrong."

But the man of God answered: "Because he is a boy and has done no harm, this much shall be done for him. He shall die in peace and shall be buried in peace. But all the rest of the house of Jeroboam shall die in war and their bodies shall be eaten by the dogs of the field and the birds of the air, because of the sin of Jeroboam."

So Jeroboam's wife went home to her house, and as she came to the door of the house, the child died. Then there was great weeping in the house of Jeroboam, because his son was dead.

So punishment came to Jeroboam because of the wicked things he had done. And his little son, for whom he had been trying so hard to keep the kingdom, was taken away.

QUESTIONS

What did King Solomon build?

Was King Solomon always as wise as at first?

What did Solomon do for his heathen wives?

Who was Rehoboam?

Who came to visit Solomon when Rehoboam was a boy?

What did Rehoboam think would happen when he grew up?

What spoiled Rehoboam?

What did the people ask Rehoboam after Solomon was dead?

What did the old men tell Rehoboam to say?

What did the young men tell him?

What did Rehoboam tell the people?

What happened to Rehoboam?

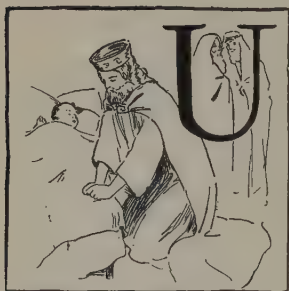
What always happens to people who are proud and think other people are made to serve them?

What happened to Jeroboam?

What happened to the kingdom?

THE THIRTIETH STORY

TWO PRINCES WHO DIED



USUALLY a good boy grows to be a good man, but sometimes a good man falls into a great sin. This is a story about a wicked thing that King David did, and how King David's little son died because of it. You remember what a good man David was, and how hard he tried to be friends with Saul, even after Saul wanted to kill him. After many years Saul died and David was made king. He was a good man and a good king. But once he did a very bad thing, and he was punished for it.

One evening when the sun was going down and the weather was pleasant, David went up on the top of his house to walk about. The houses in the land where David lived are always made with flat roofs. For the weather is very hot, and in the evening when the stars are beginning to shine, it is pleasant to go out in the cool air and sit down on the house-top.

This particular evening when David was walking on the top of his house he looked down and saw a woman. She was the most beautiful woman that David had ever seen, and he said to himself: "I must have her for my wife."

So David sent to his servants and said: "Who is the beautiful woman I have seen? She shall be my wife. I am the king of all the land and everyone must do as I say. Whoever she is, I will take her."

The servants answered: "She is the wife of Uriah. You cannot have her, for she is already married."

When David heard this, he was very sad, for he had not thought that the beautiful woman could be



DAVID WEeping FOR HIS SON.

married already. But still he wondered how he could get her for his wife. He thought: "If only her husband Uriah would die, then I could marry her."

Now there was a great war in the land and Uriah went out to fight. Then David sent word to the captain of his soldiers and said: "Uriah

is a brave man. Give him a place that is full of danger, so that he may die."

Then the captain of David's soldiers did as David said. When the fighting was hardest he gave Uriah a place that was full of danger, and the Philistines shot Uriah, and he died. Then the captain sent word to David: "The fighting has been very terrible, and

many men have been killed, and thy servant Uriah is dead also."

As soon as David heard that Uriah was dead, he sent to the wife of Uriah and brought her to the palace and married her. And after a while they had a baby boy. But God was very angry with David, for he had done a wicked thing.

So a dreadful sickness came upon the baby boy. And the servants came to David and said: "Your boy is very sick, and we are afraid that he will die." Then David was sad, and he prayed to God. All night he prayed, and he lay on the hard ground and wept.

Then there came a man of God to David. His name was Nathan. And he said: "I have a story to tell you, David." And David said: "What is it?"

Nathan replied: "There were two men in one city. One was rich and the other poor. The rich man had many sheep and cows, but the poor man had only one little lamb that he loved very dearly. It grew up with his children and it was the pet of all the house.

"But one day a traveller came from far away to visit the rich man. And the rich man did not want to kill any of his own sheep and cows, for he was very stingy, so he sent and got the one little lamb that belonged to the poor man, and he killed it, and gave it to the traveller to eat."

Then David said: "Who is this rich man? Let him be punished, for he has done a very wicked thing. I am king, and I will see that he is punished."

Nathan said to David: "Thou art the man! For thou art king, and very rich. Everything in the land belongs to thee, and the choice of all the maidens is

thine. But Uriah was a poor man and he had only one thing, his beautiful wife. And you sent and stole his wife from him. You are worse than the rich man of whom I told you, for you stole his wife and killed him besides."

David cried aloud: "I have done a great sin. God will surely punish me for it."

Nathan answered: "God will punish you for it, but because you are sorry, you shall not die. But the child that was born shall surely die."

David was very sad because God was going to punish him by taking away his baby boy. He prayed to God not to take away the baby. All night he prayed, and for seven nights he lay on the hard ground. But on the seventh night the baby died.

And when the servants of David saw that the baby was dead, they were afraid to tell him. For they said: "While the baby was still alive we tried to speak to him, and he only wept and lay on the ground and prayed. And now when the child is dead, who knows what dreadful thing he may do? He may kill himself for sorrow."

But when David saw that the servants were whispering together in the house, he knew that something had happened. So he sent for them and said: "Is the child dead?" Then the servants answered: "He is dead."

As soon as David heard that the child was dead, he stopped weeping and praying. He arose from the ground and washed himself, and put on clean, fresh clothes and went to the house of God to pray and give sacrifices. And after he had been to the house of God,

he came back home and said: "Bring forth bread, that I may eat, for I have not eaten for many days."

The servants were very much surprised and they said to David: "Why is it that you have done this? While the child was still alive, you wept so much that we were afraid to tell you when the child was dead, for we thought, 'If he is so sad when the child is sick, he will kill himself when he knows that the child is dead.' But now that the child is dead, you stop weeping, and you wash yourself and put on fresh clothes and go to the house of God. Why have you not continued to weep?"

David answered: "When the child was still alive I wept and prayed. For I knew that God was punishing me for my own sin. And I hoped that if God knew how sorry I was, he would not take away my child.

"But now the child is dead and what good does it do to weep? God has taken him and has punished me. The child will never come back to me now, but some day I shall go to him."

Then David went to his wife and comforted her and told her not to be sad. "God has punished me," he said "for taking you away from Uriah. But some day we will have another son and he will live, and be a great man."

And it happened as David had said. For another son was born to David, and his name was Solomon. And David loved him better than all of his other sons, because he came to take the place of the boy that had died. And David said: "Solomon shall be king after me, and he shall be a very great man." So Solomon

grew up and David took good care of him. And Solomon became a great man and a very wise king.

QUESTIONS

Whom did David see from his housetop?

What did he do to get her for his wife?

What story did the man of God tell David?

What did the man of God say would happen to David's son?

What did David do for seven days and nights when the child was sick?

What did David do when the boy died?

Was David very sorry for the wicked thing he had done?

What other boy died because of his father's wickedness?

What did Jeroboam do that was wrong?

What did his wife do when the boy was sick?

Where did she go?

What did the man of God tell her?



THE THIRTY-FIRST STORY

THE PROPHET AND THE BOY



REMEMBER, for you must have heard, the story of the prophet Elisha and the boy who died and came to life again. You remember Elijah, and how Elisha came to be his helper. And lest you have forgotten this story, I will tell it to you here. It shows in a wonderful way how God selects men to carry on His work.

The prophet Elijah who had lived in the land for many years, was very old, and the time came near when he must die. Then the word of God came to him and said: "You are now an old man and the time of your death draws near. Arise, and take the horn of holy oil, and anoint Elisha to be man of God when you are dead."

So Elijah went to find Elisha.

He found him in the field with his oxen, and he went over to him and put his own cloak on him. This was a sign that Elisha was to wear the cloaks that the men of God wore. Then the man of God said: "Come with me, for you have been chosen to be a man of God after me."

But Elisha answered: "Let me first go and kiss

my father and mother, and then I will come after thee." And the man of God said: "Go."

So Elisha went home and made a feast to all the people. He kissed his father and mother, and said



THE ASCENSION OF ELIJAH.

goodbye to all his family, and he arose and went after the man of God. He learned all the things that a man of God must know. And after the old priest was dead, Elisha became man of God. And his name was great in the land.

One day Elisha was going through a little town and he passed by the house of a woman who was very wise and great. The woman came out and said to Elisha: "O man of God, I pray thee come in, and eat bread with me."

So Elisha went into the woman's house, and she set food before him, and he ate. And the woman said: "O man of God, when thou art passing through this town, I pray thee come in to me always." Then Elisha saw that the woman was a kind-hearted woman, and he thanked her. And always after that, when he was passing through the town, he stopped at the woman's house, and she set food before him and he ate. And Elisha wondered what good thing he could do for the woman because she was so kind to him.

And after a while the woman said to her husband: "See now, this man of God is a holy man. And he goes through this town very often. But he has no place to stay. Let us make for him a little room that shall be all his own. And let us put in it a bed and a table and a seat and a candle-stick. Then when he comes through the town he can stay with us as long as he wishes to stay."

Then the woman's husband was pleased that his wife was so kind-hearted and he made a little room for Elisha. He put a table in it, and a bed, and a seat, and a candle-stick, so that Elisha might have everything that he needed.

When Elisha came around again, the woman said to him: "I pray thee, O man of God, stay with me in my house as often as thou art passing through the town in which we live. For I have made a little room that shall be all thine own."

So Elisha went to the woman's house and stayed all night in the little room she had made for him. And when morning was come, he called the woman and she came to the door of the room.

Then Elisha said: "What shall be done for you, and what is your desire? For you have shown me great kindness. Shall I speak to the king, or to the captain of the soldiers, that they may give you what you wish and make you great?"

But the woman answered: "Do not speak to the king nor the captain to make me great, for I live at home among my own people, and I have no desire to leave them." So the woman went out from the room.

Elisha called his servant and said to him: "What shall we do for this woman who has been so kind to us? Do you know anything that she wishes?" And the servant said: "O Elisha, the woman's husband is old and she has no son. Surely a son would be the greatest wish of her heart."

Then Elisha called the woman again, and she came in and said: "O man of God, what do you wish with me?"

And Elisha said: "A year from now, when this time of year comes again, thou shalt hold a son in thine arms." But the woman answered: "O man of God, do not tell me what can never come true. For many years I have wished for a son and I have never had one. Do not make me wish for a son again, for it is hard to wish and not to get what I have wished for."

But Elisha said: "I have told you truly. When the year is gone you shall have a son."

And it happened just as Elisha said. Before the

year was over the woman had a son. Then she was very glad and she thanked God, saying: "For many years I have wished for a son, and now Elisha, the man of God, has given him to me."

So the boy grew older and older. Every year when the boy's father went out into the field to bring in the grain, the boy said to him: "Can I go with you?" But the father answered: "You are not yet old enough, my son."

After a while when the boy had begged many times, there came a year when the father said: "You may go with me today into the field, and help me gather the grain." So the boy went into the field with his father.

But the sun was very hot, and the ground was dusty, and there was not a cloud in the sky. The boy was not used to working in the hot sun. After a while he grew very tired. Then his father said: "If you are tired, my son, you may go back to the house." But the boy would not say that he was tired, for he did not want to be sent back.

Then his head began to ache. It ached very badly, but still he did not tell anyone, for he wanted to be a big boy and stay out in the field all day. But his headache grew worse and worse till his father asked him: "What is the matter, my son?"

The boy put his hand to his head and said: "My head, my head!" And the father said to the servant: "Carry him to his mother; he is too young to be in the field."

So the servant carried the boy in to his mother, and she held him on her lap till noon, and then he died.

Then she arose and carried him into the room that she had made for Elisha, and she laid him on the bed there.

The woman sent to her husband and said: "Give me, I pray thee, one of thy servants, and saddle one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God and come back again." So her husband sent one of the servants with an ass to take the woman to the man of God.

She saddled the ass and said to the servant: "Drive and go forward very quickly. Do not stop, till we come to the man of God." So they went very quickly.

And it came to pass that the man of God saw her afar off, and he said to his servant: "Arise, and run to meet the woman, and say to her: 'Is it well with thee, is it well with thy husband, is it well with thy child?' " And when the servant came and asked the woman these questions, she answered: "It is well with me," for she could not tell a servant the dreadful thing that had happened to her boy.

But when she came to Elisha, she fell on her face to the ground and caught hold of his feet. And Elisha said to her: "Why is thy soul troubled?"

The woman answered: "Did I not wish for a son? And did I not say to thee: 'Do not make me wish if my wish must be taken away?' " Then Elisha knew that something dreadful had happened to her son, and he said to his servant: "Rise up and take my staff and go thy way. And if any man is in the path, do not stop to speak to him, and if any man speaks to thee, answer not again. But go to the room where the child lies, and lay my staff on his face."

But the mother of the child did not believe that Elisha's servant could do anything, so she said: "As God lives, I will not leave thee, O man of God."

Then Elisha arose and went with the woman to her home. And the servant went ahead, and laid the staff on the face of the child, but the child did not move at all. So the servant came back to Elisha and said: "The child is dead."

And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was laid upon the bed. And Elisha went in and shut the door and prayed to God. And he went up and lay upon the child and put his mouth to the child's mouth and his eyes to the child's eyes. And the cold body of the child grew warm again.

As the woman came in answer to his call, Elisha said: "Take up thy son." When the woman saw that her son was alive, she ran and fell at Elisha's feet and bowed herself to the ground. Then she took up her son and went out.

And Elisha departed again to his own home.

QUESTIONS

Who was Elisha?

How did he become a man of God?

What did a good woman do for him?

What did Elisha promise her because of her kindness?

Did she get what he promised?

Where did the boy go with his father when he was grown?

What happened to him?

What did his mother do?

What did Elisha do for the boy?

THE THIRTY-SECOND STORY

NAAMAN'S SLAVE GIRL



NAAMAN was a great and mighty captain who had many soldiers. Because he was a wise man and a great man his king gave him the highest place in the kingdom next to himself, and said to him: "You and you only shall lead all my soldiers to battle. You are the greatest of my captains, and shall have command of all my armies."

So Naaman led the soldiers to fight with the Children of Israel. And because he was such a great man, and because he had so many soldiers, he drove the Children of Israel before him, and killed a great many of them. The ones that he did not kill, he took for captives.

One day, when he was out fighting, some of his soldiers brought to him a little girl. They had captured her in the fields, and they knew that she belonged to the Children of Israel. So they took her for a slave and brought her to Naaman.

But what could Naaman do with a little girl in the camp with all the soldiers? He wondered for a long time about it. At last he said: "I know what I can do. I will send her home to my wife to be a servant

maid, for I do not want her here in the camp." So Naaman sent the little girl home to his wife, and she became a servant maid. She waited on Naaman's wife and was her slave.

All day long she worked very hard, and she did her best to please her mistress. But at night she would think of her own people in her own land and wonder whether she would ever see them again. She thought of her father and mother and wondered if they were still alive. Then she thought of the holy place where she went every year with her father and mother to see the man of God make the sacrifices. And she thought of the man of God and how great he was and what great things he did.

Then the little slave girl said to herself: "Naaman and his soldiers are very great and strong, and they are good fighting men, but they are not as wise as the men in my own country. They do not know the ways of God like the men of my own land." And she wept very bitterly because she could not go back to her people.

But after a while she learned something about Naaman that made her very sorry for him. Naaman was a great man and a strong man and a very rich man. But Naaman was unhappy. He had a dreadful sickness and he knew that he was going to die before many years were gone. The name of this sickness is leprosy. It is the most dreadful sickness there is. Little pieces of skin and flesh all over a man turn white and then drop off, until the man has all dropped to pieces. And sometimes it takes many years before he dies.

The little maid used to see Naaman's wife weeping very hard. Then she asked her and said: "O my mistress, what makes you sad and why do you weep?" And at last the mistress told the little slave girl that Naaman had that dreadful sickness called leprosy.



THE SLAVE GIRL TELLING HER MISTRESS OF ELISHA.

The little slave girl thought and thought, and wondered what she could do for her mistress. And she remembered the man of God in her own land, and how wise he was and how many wonderful things he had

done. And the more she thought about it, the surer she was that the man of God could cure Naaman's dreadful sickness.

So at last the little slave girl said to her mistress: "Why does not my master Naaman go to the man of God among the Children of Israel, for he would cure his leprosy for him?"

Naaman's wife was glad at heart when she heard these words, and she sent a servant to Naaman where he was at war with his soldiers. And the servant said: "O master, the little maid of Israel that is in thy house, says that there is a man of God in Israel who can cure thee of thy leprosy. And my mistress, thy wife, has sent me to give thee this word."

When Naaman heard this, he did not believe it. For there had never been anyone who could cure such a dreadful disease as leprosy. But he said to himself: "At any rate I can but try." So he went to his king and said: "O King, a maid from the land of Israel says that there is a man of God among her people who can cure my leprosy. But how shall we find this man of God?"

The king answered: "I will give thee a letter to the king of Israel, and I will tell him that I have sent thee to be cured of thy leprosy. Then the King of Israel will know where to find the man of God and he will send thee to him."

So the king gave Naaman a letter to the king of Israel, and Naaman brought it to him. And the letter said: "O King, I have sent thee my servant Naaman, the captain of my soldiers, to have his leprosy cured. Send now someone to cure him."

Now what would you think if a man came to you, and said: "I want you to cure me of a dreadful sickness," and you did not know anything about what had to be done? And what would you do, if the man had thousands of soldiers to fight for him, and you thought he was going to fight you, if you did not cure him? You would be afraid, would you not? So the King of Israel was much afraid.

And the King of Israel said: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive? How can I cure such a dreadful disease as that? Naaman is trying to make a quarrel with me, so that he may fight me." Then the King of Israel wept and tore his clothes.

But there was a wise man who lived in Israel. His name was Elisha, and he was a man of God. When he heard that the king had wept and torn his clothes, he sent word to him and said: "Why do you weep and tear your clothes? Send Naaman to me, and he shall see whether there is a man of God in Israel."

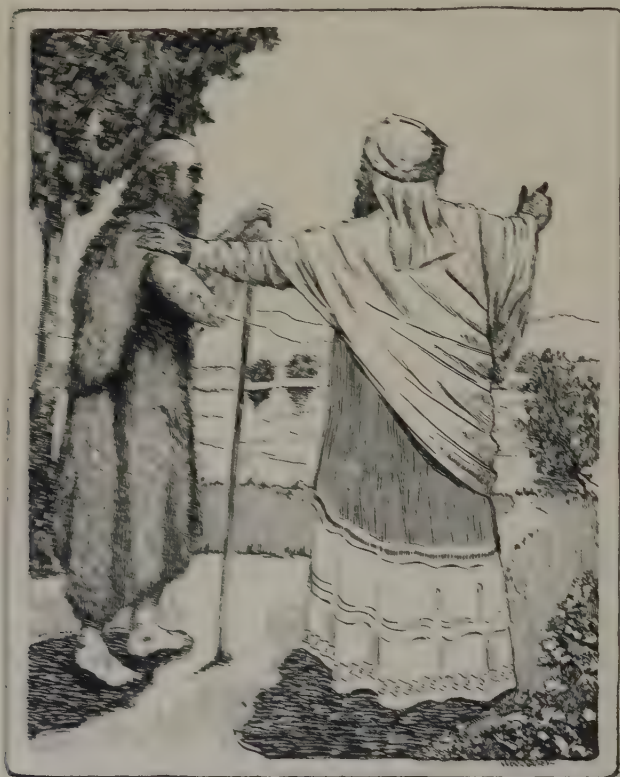
So Naaman came to see Elisha. He brought with him soldiers and servants and horses and chariots, and he stood before the door of Elisha. And Naaman thought: "I am such a great man, that the man of God will be proud to see me. He will come down and cure me with his own hands."

But Elisha did not even come down to see Naaman. He sent a servant to him, and the servant said: "Go and wash in the river Jordan seven times, and you shall be cured."

Naaman was very angry. He said: "I thought he would surely come out to me, and stand and call upon the name of God, and wave his hand over the place,

and cure my leprosy. But if I am only to bathe in a river, are not the rivers of my own land better than this dirty little Jordan?" So he turned and went away very angry.

But his servants came near and said to him: "O



"NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE A PRESENT FROM ME"

master, if the man of God had told you to do some great thing would you not have done it? But now he has told you a very little thing. At any rate you can but try it."

Naaman said to himself: "It is true. It will do no harm to try." And he went to the river Jordan to bathe. He bathed once and he bathed twice and he bathed seven times. And the seventh time his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was cured of his leprosy.

Then Naaman came back to the man of God, with all his horses and chariots and servants. And he said: "I know that there is no God in all the earth but the God of Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take a present from me." Elisha would not take a present. So Naaman left Elisha to go back to his own land.

But Elisha had a wicked servant. When the servant saw that Elisha would not take a present from Naaman, the servant said to himself: "It is a shame that all that money and those beautiful clothes that Naaman wanted to give Elisha should go to waste. For Naaman is a rich man and has plenty of beautiful things. He would be glad to pay for being cured of his leprosy."

The servant thought: "I know what I will do. I will run after Naaman and say that Elisha has changed his mind. And I will take the presents and bring them back again and keep them for myself."

So the servant ran after Naaman, and Naaman saw him coming and said: "Do you bring me word from Elisha?" The servant said: "O Naaman, two men have come in to visit Elisha and he wishes the beautiful presents you wanted to give him, so that he can have enough for his friends."

Then Naaman sent silver and beautiful clothes to the house of Elisha. He sent so much that it took two

of Naaman's men to carry the present. But as soon as they got to the house, the servant took the silver and the beautiful clothes, and hid them away, and then went in to his master.

Elisha said: "Where have you been?" And the servant answered: "Nowhere."

But Elisha said: "Do you think I do not know what you have done? Is this a time to be taking money and precious things from the men who are fighting the land of Israel? And now, because you have deceived me, the leprosy that Naaman had, shall come upon you."

So the servant went out from Elisha a leper as white as snow. But Naaman went back to his own land. And because the little slave girl had told him how to be cured of his leprosy, he gave her presents of gold and silver and beautiful clothes, and he made her free and sent her back to her own land.

QUESTIONS

Who was Naaman?

What was the matter with him?

Who lived in his house?

What did she tell her mistress about Elisha?

What did Naaman say to the King of Israel?

What did Elisha tell Naaman to do?

Why was Naaman angry?

What happened when Naaman bathed in the Jordan?

What did Naaman want to give Elisha?

What did Elisha's servant do?

How was he punished?

THE THIRTY-THIRD STORY

THE PRINCE WHO WAS HIDDEN SIX YEARS



QUEENS have done some good things and some bad ones. This is the story of a bad queen and a young prince.

In the days when the kings of Israel were very wicked, there was born in the palace a little prince. His name was

Joash. His father was a very wicked king, and his mother was a very wicked queen, and his grandmother was the wickedest woman in the whole world. She was called Athaliah.

So when God saw how wicked the king was and how wicked the queen was, the word of God came to the man of God, saying: "Rise up now, and choose a great man of war, and make him king, so that he may kill all these wicked people."

Now you remember that ever since the days of Rehoboam, the wicked son of Solomon, there had been two kingdoms in Israel. There was the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. But both of the kings and both of the queens in both of the kingdoms were just as wicked as they could be.

The man of God arose and went quickly to the

house where the chief captain of the soldiers lived. When he reached the house, all the captains were sitting down at the table. The man of God said: "I have a message for you, O Captain."

All the captains looked up from the table, but the chief captain, whose name was Jehu, said: "To whom is your word, O man of God?" And the man of God answered: "To thee, O captain."

Jehu arose and went with the man of God into an inner room. There he threw holy oil on Jehu's head and said: "This is the word of God. I have chosen thee to be king over the northern kingdom. All of the wicked people shalt thou kill, the wicked king and the wicked queen and all their wicked sons. And the wicked king and queen of the southern kingdom shalt thou kill also, for all of the land is very wicked. The kings have killed the men of God and the priests of God, and the servants of God. And so they shall all be cut off, till the dogs eat them up in the fields."

The man of God then opened the door and ran away quickly. And Jehu came out where the captains were sitting. And they said to him: "What was the word of the man of God?"

But at first Jehu would not answer, for he was afraid that they would not want him to be king. So he only said: "You saw the man and you heard him speak." The captains answered: "It is not true; tell us what he said to thee alone."

Jehu looked at them and saw that they were his friends, and he answered: "The man of God said to me: 'This is the word of God. Thou art king over Israel.'"

Then the captains arose and shouted for joy and they blew their trumpets. And everyone shouted: "Jehu is king." So Jehu became king over the northern kingdom.

The wicked king of the northern country and the wicked king of the southern country came out both together to meet Jehu. And they met him in a garden. Then they said: "Is it peace, O Jehu, and have you come as a friend?"

But Jehu answered: "What peace can there be, when there is so much wickedness in the land?" And when the kings heard this, they were afraid, and they turned and fled. But Jehu followed them and ran his sword into them and they died.

Then Jehu went to the great city of the northern kingdom to find the wicked queen. And when she heard what had happened, she painted her face and looked out of the window. And Jehu came in at the gate and looked up and saw her.

The wicked queen said: "Have you come in peace, O murderer of the king?" But Jehu lifted up his face to the window and said: "Who is on my side? Who?"

Two slaves looked out of the window and said: "We are on your side, for we hate this wicked queen." And Jehu said: "Throw her down." So they threw her down from the window, and her blood splashed on the wall and on Jehu's horses, and she died.

So Jehu became king of the northern kingdom. But he left the southern kingdom alone after he had killed the king. And the king's mother, the wickedest woman in the world, was still alive. And she was the grandmother of the little prince Joash.

As soon as she heard that her son was dead, she said to herself: "For many years my son has been king, and he has always done whatever I told him to do. But now he is dead, and I do not know who will be king in his place, when Jehu goes back to his kingdom of the north. I know what I will do. I will kill all the princes and all their cousins and everyone of the royal family. And then I shall be queen alone."

So the wicked old Athaliah sent her servants to kill all the princes and all of their cousins, and every one of the royal family, so that she could be queen. And they killed all of them except one baby boy. He was the little baby boy named Joash.

Joash was only one year old when the wicked old queen told her servants to kill all the princes. He was a beautiful little baby. And he had an old aunt who took care of him and loved him very dearly. The old aunt said: "I will hide Joash in the bedroom for he is very little and the wicked queen will forget all about him. He is too beautiful a baby to be killed as the others have been."

She hid Joash in the bedroom when the soldiers of



THE RACE OF JEHU.

the wicked queen went through the palace to kill the princes. They hunted and hunted for all the princes and they killed everyone of them. But they forgot all about Joash. He was so little, and they didn't see him anywhere around.

Then the good old aunt of Joash thought to her-



HIDING JOASH FROM THE SOLDIERS.

self: "I wonder what I can do with this baby. If he stays here in the house with me, the wicked old queen will find him, and then she will kill us both."

At last she said: "I know what I will do. I will take Joash to the priest who lives in the house of God. There he shall live until he is grown. For the priest

will teach him to love God and to be good and do everything that a king should do. And the wicked queen will never guess who it is that is staying in the house of God."

Accordingly the aunt took Joash to the temple and gave him to the priest. And Joash lived there for six years. He learned to love God, and to do good, and he learned everything that a king must know. Joash was an obedient boy and he loved the old priest who taught him, and he did everything that the priest told him to do. So the priest was very happy, for he said: "When Joash is king, then he will be a good king, for I have taught him."

At last when Joash was seven years old, the priest could not wait any longer. The wicked queen grew more wicked every year. The priest thought: "Joash is very young to be king, but after all he would be better than the wicked old woman who is queen now."

So the priest sent to the captains of the soldiers and called them all to come up to the house of God. And when they came he said: "There is something I have to show you."

They replied: "Show it to us then, O priest."

But the priest said: "Swear to me first by the altar of God that you will tell no one what you have seen until I let you speak."

The captains said: "O priest, we will tell no one until you let us speak."

Then the priest led them to a room in the house of God, and he opened the door. They looked in and saw a little boy of seven playing. And the priest said: "Do you know who that little boy is? He is



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THE CORONATION OF JOASH.

Prince Joash, one of the princes that the wicked old queen tried to kill, but his aunt saved him and he has lived here in the house of God all these six years."

The captains said: "What shall we do with Joash, and how shall we make him king?" And the priest answered: "Divide yourselves into three companies, and take all your soldiers. And I will set you for a watch over the little prince, so that no one shall harm him. We will then make a feast for the people, and show the prince to them."

So the priest made a feast for the people, and they all came together to the house of God. As soon as they had come in, the priest took down the old swords and spears that once belonged to King David, and that hung in the temple for a gift to God. He gave them to the soldiers and said: "Take care of your prince."

Then the old priest brought out the little prince and showed him to the people. And all the people wondered who this boy might be. The priest cried aloud: "This is Joash, the prince, whom the wicked old queen tried to kill. But his aunt saved him and brought him to the house of God and he has lived here all these years."

The priest next took a crown and put it on Joash, and all the people shouted: "Long live the king." For they were all of them tired of the wicked old queen and they did not want her any more.

As soon as Athaliah heard the people shouting, she wondered what had happened, and came down quickly to the house of God where all the people were. She looked, and behold, the young king stood in the

house of God, and the captains and trumpet-blowers by the king. And all the people were shouting for joy and blowing trumpets.

Then Athaliah tore her clothes and cried: "Who is on my side? Let them kill this boy, and I will make them great." But no one answered.

Athaliah saw that her time was come to die, and that no one wanted her for queen. So she was afraid and ran out of the house of God. But the soldiers followed her until she came to the palace, and there they killed her.

The priest said: "O Children of Israel, make now a promise to God this day. Love Him and do as He tells you to do, and obey your young king, and the land shall be strong and great."

So the people shouted aloud and said: "We will obey God and our young king."

Joash was therefore made king. He was only seven years old, but he was a good king. He always asked the priest what to do, and when the priest told him, he always did it.

He lived and grew up, and was king for many years. He was kind to the people and loved God and prayed to Him, and was not like the wicked king who was his father. And all the people were very glad that Joash had not been killed.

QUESTIONS

What did the man of God say to Jehu?

What did Jehu arise and do?

What did he do to the wicked queen of the north?

What wicked woman was left in the southern kingdom?

What did she make up her mind to do?

What prince was not killed?

How was he saved?

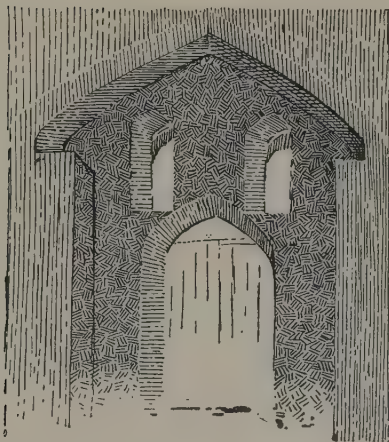
Where did he live till he was seven years old?

Why did the priest of God send for the captains?

What did all the people do when they saw the prince?

What happened to Athaliah?

Was Joash a good king?



THE THIRTY-FOURTH STORY

A GOOD FATHER'S BAD SON



EZEKIAH was a great and good king in the land of Israel. He loved God and prayed to Him always. But the Children of Israel had forgotten God. They prayed to the sun and the moon and the stars, and they put up places to pray to them right in the very middle of the house of God.

So King Hezekiah said to the people: "You must not pray to the sun and the moon and the stars, for they cannot do anything for you. You must pray to God, who made all these things." And Hezekiah tore down the idols and the pictures of the sun and moon that the people had put up in the house of God, and he said to the people: "You must pray to God only."

And because Hezekiah was such a good man, God made him strong enough and brave enough to fight all his enemies and to drive them out of the land. So all the Children of Israel were happy, as long as Hezekiah was king.

But all this time King Hezekiah had no son. And often he wished for a son who would be a good king

after him, and who would love God and pray to Him, and fight bravely for his people.

One day a terrible sickness fell on Hezekiah, the king, and he sent for the man of God, and said: "Tell me, I pray thee, what I shall do for this sickness."



THE SICKNESS OF HEZEKIAH

The man of God answered the king and said: "O King, set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." Then Hezekiah was very sad at heart when

he heard those words, for he thought: "I have no son to come after me and be a good king to my people."

So King Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to God. And he said: "Remember now, O God, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which was good in thy sight." And Hezekiah wept and prayed to God that he might live until he could have a son.

While he was praying, the man of God came back to Hezekiah and said: "O King, thus saith the God of thy father David, 'I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold I will heal thee. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and thy city out of the hand of thine enemies.'"

And everything happened as the man of God had said. In three days' time Hezekiah was cured of his sickness, and he went up to the house of God and prayed there. And after three years Hezekiah had a little son, and he called his name Manasseh.

So Hezekiah lived for fifteen years more, three years till Manasseh was born and after that twelve years. And he was a great king and did all kinds of great deeds. He saw that there was not water enough in the city, and that the poor people had to go a long way to get it. So he made a ditch up to a brook in the mountains, and brought the water down to the city that the people might have plenty.

Many other great things Hezekiah did, and he grew very rich and had gold and silver and many precious things. But there was one thing that Hezekiah forgot. It was the most important thing of all, What do you suppose it was?

He forgot to take good care of his little boy. That was a very strange thing, was it not, when that little boy was going to be king some day? Would he be a good king or a bad king? It would all depend, would it not, on the way Hezekiah taught him?

But King Hezekiah was so busy doing other things that he did not stop to see what Manasseh was learning. He did not even send a man of God to teach Manasseh about God. He just left Manasseh with the servant maids and the women of the palace.

The women of the palace said to Manasseh: "Do you see the sun, how beautiful and bright he is? When you want anything, you must pray to the sun. But you must never let your father know." So little Manasseh used to pray to the sun. He never told his father, and his father never asked him.

The women of the palace also said to Manasseh: "Do you see the moon, how beautiful and silvery she is? You must pray to the moon too. But you must never let your father know." So little Manasseh learned to pray to the moon, and all the time his father never knew, for he never took the trouble to ask what they were teaching Manasseh.

One day some princes came from a far country to visit Hezekiah. And King Hezekiah took them all through his palace and showed them his gold and silver and his beautiful armor. King Hezekiah was growing very proud of all his riches and never thought of what would happen to his kingdom when he died and his little son had to be king.

But all this time the man of God was watching Hezekiah. And one day he came to the palace to

see the king. It was the day after the princes from a far country had been there.

"Who are these men, and what did they want with you?" asked the man of God. And King Hezekiah answered very proudly: "They have come from a far country to see me, because they heard how great and how rich I am."

The man of God asked: "What did you show them?" And Hezekiah answered: "I showed them all my gold and my silver and all of my riches."

Then the man of God answered: "O King, hear the word of God. Behold, the days come, when all that is in thine house, and the riches which thy fathers have laid up unto this day, shall be carried into a far country; nothing shall be left. And thy son shall be taken away as a slave to a far country, because he has not learned to love God and pray to God, but he prays to the sun and the moon."

King Hezekiah died, and his little son, Manasseh, became king. Manasseh was only twelve years old when his father died. Do you think he knew very much about how to be king? He only knew enough to do what the women of the palace told him to do. And they did not tell him good things.

Perhaps if little Manasseh had had a man of God to be his teacher, he would have been a better king. There is another story about a very little boy who became king, but he was a good king, because he had a great man of God to tell him what to do. But Manasseh was a bad king.

For the women of the palace said to him: "O Manasseh, you are king now, and you can do whatever you

please. You do not have to hide things from your father any more, for he is dead. Let everyone know that you pray to the sun and the moon and the stars and that all the people must do the same."

So Manasseh said to his servants: "Make places in the house of God where all the people can pray to the sun and the moon and the stars. For what is the use of having only one God, as my father had? I will pray to as many as I please, and all the people shall do the same."

Manasseh taught the people to do other wicked things. He told them that they must give their children to the sun-god, and must burn them alive before the sun-god in order to please him. He said to the people: "The gods do not want us to be good. They do not care about that at all. They want us to kill our children for them."

So the people did very wicked things. And when they were afraid they would be punished, they brought their children to the sun-god and killed them before him and said: "O sun-god, take care of us and do not let us be punished, for we have given you our children." All of these wicked things Manasseh taught the people.

After a while when Manasseh grew up, he burned his own little boy before the sun-god. The women of the palace had taught him that that was the right thing to do, and he believed them.

And Manasseh went to wicked magicians and to men who had charms that brought devils to help them. Manasseh made friends with all these wicked men and brought them into his palace. But the real men of

God, who told the people to be good and taught them about God, were not allowed to come to the palace.

Then God spoke to the man of God and said: "Behold, Manasseh, the king, is very wicked, and is doing great evil. He is doing evil himself and he is making all the people do evil, so that the Children of Israel are worse than the giants I drove out of the land for them. And now this is what shall be done to my people. I will bring such a terrible thing upon the land that the ears of everyone that heareth shall tingle. And I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.

"And all of the people shall be carried away to a strange land, where they shall be slaves. For long, long years shall they be slaves in a strange land, and only a few shall ever come back to their homes. Manasseh himself shall be carried away by his enemies, because of the wickedness he has done."

The men of the far country who once came to see King Hezekiah came back again. But this time they did not come in peace, to see the riches of the king. They came with soldiers and swords and war-chariots, and they took Manasseh away as a slave. They bound him in chains and carried him to a strange land.

Manasseh was sorry for what he had done, and he prayed to God. He told God how sorry he was, and begged God to bring him back to his kingdom again. And after many years God brought him back. And Manasseh knew that God alone could make kings great, and that He could kill or save alive as He wished.

After this Manasseh took away the moon and the sun gods, and he built up the city. He made a great wall around the city, and he built up the altars in the house of God. And he offered many sacrifices on the altars, to show that he loved God and that he would not pray any longer to idols.

But the people of the land, whom Manasseh had made to be wicked, did not become good again. For that is the terrible thing about doing wrong. Sometimes you do things that can never be made right again. And Manasseh's own son was a wicked son, and nothing that Manasseh could do ever made him good.

QUESTIONS

When King Hezekiah was sick what did he ask of God?

What did the man of God tell him?

Who was born to Hezekiah?

Did Hezekiah teach Manasseh to be good?

Who taught Manasseh?

What did they teach him?

What did Hezekiah show the princes from a far country?

What did the man of God say would happen?

When Manasseh was king what did he do in the house of God?

What did he teach the Children of Israel to do?

What happened to him?

Could Manasseh ever make things be as if he had never done wrong?

THE THIRTY-FIFTH STORY

THE GOOD YOUNG KING



OSIAH was a young king, who began to be king when he was only eight years old. But he was not a bad king, like Manasseh. He was a good king all his life. He loved God and taught his people to be good and to do what God wanted them to do.

Josiah's father was a wicked king. His name was Amon. Amon was the son of Manasseh and he grew up just like his father. He prayed to the statues made to the sun and the moon, and he taught his people that they did not have to be good if they gave plenty of gifts to the sun-god.

Amon did not take good care of Josiah. He let the women of the palace do just as they pleased with Josiah and teach him anything they wished. He did not care whether his boy grew up to be a good king or a bad king.

But there was a great man of God among the Children of Israel, and he was a near relation to the king. This man of God saw the wicked things that the king was doing, and he was very sad. But he said

to himself: "What can I do with the wicked king Amon, for he will not hear my words? I cannot speak to the king."

Then the man of God thought some more, and he said: "What can I do with the wicked people? For whatever their king does, they will do. There is nothing I can say to the people."

The man of God thought some more, and at last he said: "I know what I can do. There is little Josiah who lives in the palace. He will be king of all the land some day. I will go to Josiah, and I will teach him to love God, and pray to Him, and be good to his people. He is young and he will hear me. Then after many years, when his father is dead, Josiah will be a good king, and make his people good."

Was not the man of God a very wise man? He knew that if a boy begins to be a good boy when he is young, that he will be a good man when he grows up. So the man of God stayed in the palace and was little Josiah's teacher.

Josiah loved the man of God, and learned to do just as he told him to do. And little Josiah said to himself: "When I am a man, the people shall pray to God and do good. And I will make the man of God my greatest man, to tell me just what to do in my kingdom."

After a while it happened just as the man of God thought. For the king Amon, Josiah's father, was a wicked king and nobody loved him. Even the servants in his own palace hated him. The servants came together and said: "Let us kill the king and then we will be kings instead."

So they came upon King Amon when he was not watching, and killed him in his own house. And they said: "We will make a king of our own who will do just as we want him to do."

But the people of the land rose up and said: "Josiah shall be king, for he is our prince. And because he is only eight years old, he shall choose whomever he wishes to help him, until he has grown up." So the people of the land killed the wicked servants and made Josiah king. They said to Josiah: "Choose whomever you wish to help you be king, for you are only eight years old."

Whom do you suppose Josiah was going to choose? He answered the people and said: "I will choose the man of God to help me be king, for he is a wise and a good man, and he knows what is right. He will teach the people to love God and to pray to Him, as our fathers did when David was king, and he will help me choose good men to be my rulers and my captains."

Josiah became a good king, because he had learned to be good when he was a boy. Everything he did he asked the man of God about, and when the man of God said: "Do it," Josiah did it. For Josiah knew that he was only a little boy, and that he had much to learn.

What do you suppose was the first thing that Josiah did? He began to take away all the places where the people prayed to the sun and the moon and the stars. He broke down the altars where the people had burned their children to give them to the sun-god. Josiah tore all those places down and covered them

over with dirt and dead animals, so that no one would want to go near them again.

Then Josiah said to his servants: "Go now to the house of God, and clean out all the statues of the sun-god and the moon-goddess that my father put up there. For the house of God shall be for God alone. The people shall love God and pray to Him only. They shall learn to do what God wants them to do. They shall do good, and be kind to their neighbors, and they shall not burn their children any more."

So the servants of Josiah cleaned out the house of God and took away the statues of the sun-god and the moon-goddess. They broke them all in pieces and made them into dust.

Josiah took the wicked priests that sacrificed to the sun-god and that made the Children of Israel burn their children, and he killed them. He burned up their bones on their own altars, and he scattered the dust of the sun-god's statue all over their graves.

And all the Children of Israel began to pray to the real God that wanted them to be good and kind, and they stopped praying to the wicked gods that wanted them to burn up their children. And the people who loved God said: "What a good king little Josiah is! How glad we are that he chose the man of God to help him."

Josiah said to the man of God: "Is there anything left that I must do?"

The man of God answered: "The sun and the moon gods are broken to pieces and the people have turned to worship the true God. But the house of God is very old and broken. For the wicked kings have

taken no care of it. When money came from the people for the house of God, to build it and keep it in order, they spent it all for themselves, or for the wicked priests of the sun-god. So therefore, O King,



THE FINDING OF THE LAW

command that the house of God be built again and all the broken places made whole and beautiful."

This pleased Josiah, for he said: "When the people come up to the city to pray to God in the temple, it

would be a good thing if they should find the house of God beautiful, and not broken and old."

So Josiah said to his servants: "Take all the money that comes from the people, and spend it on the house of God. Build up the broken places, and buy stone and wood and gold and silver for all the places that are old and worn. For the house of God shall be clean and beautiful for all the people."

When they were building over the temple, and cleaning up all the old places in it, what do you suppose they found? They found an old, old copy of the words of God, that the men of God had written years and years before. But the wicked kings had not obeyed the words of God and after a while they had been lost, for no one cared about them.

When Josiah heard that an old, old book had been found in the house of God, with the words of God in it he was very glad. He said: "Bring the book to me that I may read it. For God has been very good to us, and we have found a book that tells what He wishes us to do."

But when Josiah read the words of God, he became very sad, and wept bitterly. For he saw that all of the things that God wanted his people to do had been forgotten for many years, and the people were not doing them. And he said: "God will surely punish us, because we have not done His word all these years."

So Josiah made a great feast in his city, and called together all the people of the land to pray and make sacrifices to God. It was the greatest feast that had been held by the people since the time of Samuel.

At this feast Josiah read the words of God to the

people, and said: "O Children of Israel, we have lived for many years in this land that God has given us. But we have not done the things that God tells us to do. Now therefore the words of God that are in this book shall be the laws of my kingdom. And all the people shall obey them."

Then the people went back to their homes. And some of them did the things that Josiah told them to do, but most of them were wicked. They had been wicked for so many years when Manasseh and Amon were kings that they did not know how to change. And Josiah wept because his people did not love God.

The word of God finally came to a wise woman and she said: "O King Josiah, God is angry with the people and will punish them. For kings shall come from the east and take the people as slaves, and there shall be no king left in Israel. But because you have loved God and have wept to see how wicked the people are, therefore God is pleased with you. You shall grow old in peace and shall never see the evil that shall be brought upon the people."

And everything happened as the wise woman said. Josiah was king for many years and he was a great and good king. But after he died the people went back to pray to the sun-god and the moon-goddess. And the kings of the east came down upon them and took them away for slaves, because they had not loved God and done that which was right.

QUESTIONS

Was Josiah's father a good king?

Who taught Josiah to be good?

If a boy is good when he is young, what is he pretty sure to be when he grows up?

Whom did Josiah choose to help him to be king?

What did Josiah do to the altars of the sun and moon gods?

What did he do to the wicked priests?

What did he do to the house of God?

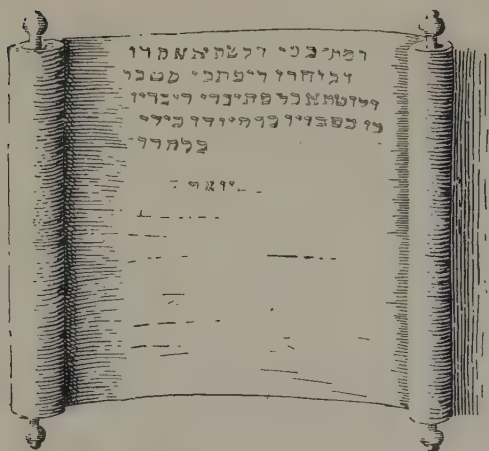
What did he find in the house of God?

What did he tell the people?

Did the people love God?

What did the wise woman say would happen to the people?

What happened to Josiah?



THE THIRTY-SIXTH STORY

THE GIRL WHO BECAME A QUEEN



ERXES was a great king. He ruled over many people and he had a palace of marble, red and black and yellow and white. It was the most beautiful palace that ever was seen. And whenever the king gave a feast, the people who came sat on couches of gold and silver, and the hangings of the palace were white and green and blue and purple, all of silk and very beautiful.

One day the king said to his servants: "Send through all the land and seek for all the beautiful maidens, and bring them to the palace. One by one shall they come in to me, and I will choose a queen from among them. The one who is the most beautiful of all and who pleases me best shall be queen."

So the king's servants sent through all the land and brought the beautiful maidens to the king's palace. They were all of them very lovely, but none of them pleased the king.

Now there was living in the land a maiden named Esther. She was one of the Children of Israel. Years and years before the great king had gone up to the land where the Children of Israel lived and had

fought with them, and made them his servants. And he had brought all their chief men away from the land where they lived, so that they could not fight any more. He made them live in his own land and his own city. And Esther was one of the Children of Israel.

Esther was very beautiful. She had long black hair, and lovely black eyes, and she was the loveliest of all the maidens that went in to the king. And as soon as the king saw Esther he said: "She and she only shall be my queen."

So Esther was made queen of the whole land. But she never told the king who she was and what people she came from, for everyone hated the Children of Israel, and tried to make slaves of them. And when Esther went up to the palace, her cousin said to her: "Do not tell the king that you are one of the Children of Israel, or he will not marry you. But after you have become queen, then you can help us."

Esther became queen. But she always watched for a chance to help her people, for Esther loved her people and was sorry that everyone was cruel to them and made servants of them. And after a while Esther had her chance.

There was in the king's palace a man named Haman who hated all the Children of Israel and wanted to kill them. One day when he was coming into the palace, he saw Esther's cousin standing outside the gate.

When Haman went into the palace, all the people used to bow down before him, for he was such a great man, and he was a friend of the king. And Haman was very proud. If he saw any man who did not bow

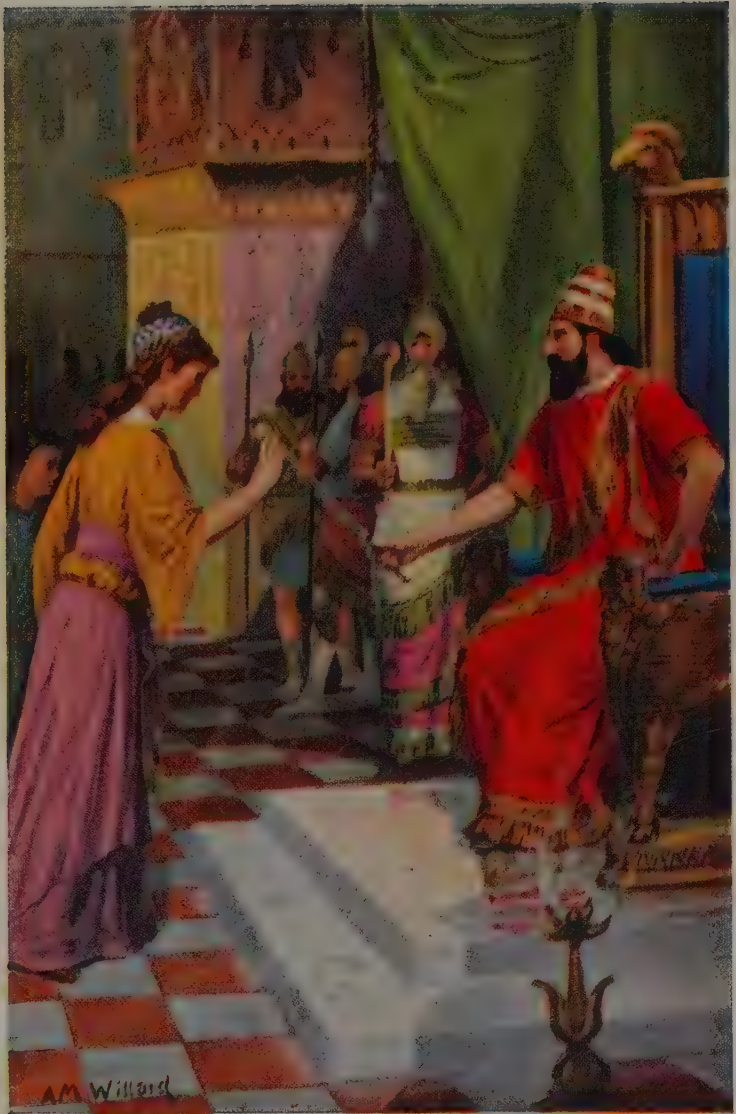
down to him, he hated that man and tried to kill him. So that day when Haman was going into the palace, he looked straight at Esther's cousin to see if he would bow down. But Esther's cousin stood up very straight and looked at Haman and never bowed at all.

This made Haman very angry. He said to himself: "It is not enough to kill that man alone, for he is only one man and not big enough for me to notice. But he is one of those Children of Israel. I know what I will do. I will ask the king to set a day on which all the Children of Israel all through the land shall be killed."

Haman did not know that the man he saw was Esther's cousin, for Esther had never told anyone who she was. So Haman came in to the king and said: "O King, these Children of Israel that live in your land are a wicked people. They do no good to anyone. If the king will give his word and tell his soldiers to kill them, then I will pay to the king thirty million dollars, because I hate these people and wish to see them killed."

The king took his ring off of his finger and gave it to Haman and said: "Do as you wish with the ring, and make my soldiers do whatever you please, for you are my friend. Whatever you wish, I wish." And all this time the king and Haman did not know that Queen Esther was one of those Children of Israel herself.

Then Haman called the king's servants and sent out letters all through the land saying: "On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, all the Jews all over the land must be killed, and whoever kills them can



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ESTHER APPROACHING THE KING.

take their money and everything that belongs to them." The Jews were the Children of Israel, because they were the great-great-grandchildren of Jacob and his twelve sons. And all the Jews that there are today belong to those same Children of Israel.

When Esther's cousin heard of what Haman had done, he went to the palace. And he sat down before the king's gate and tore his clothes and poured ashes on his head. Then the maidens who were slaves to Esther came to her and said: "Your cousin is sitting by the king's gate with ashes on his head and his clothes torn, because he is so sad."

Esther sent to her cousin to ask what the matter was. For the wife of the king could never go out of the palace to see any man, even if the man was her own cousin. So she sent her maidens instead.

Her cousin said: "Tell Esther that the king has given his ring to Haman, and the word has gone out that all the Jews shall die. And tell her to go in to the king, and pray for mercy on her people."

Esther was very sad when she heard these words, and she sent her maidens to her cousin to tell him: "There is a law in the land that no one shall go in to see the king unless the king sends for him. And if any one goes into the king's room when the king has not sent for him, then he shall be killed, unless the king holds out his golden scepter. And the king has not sent for me for thirty days. But this thing I will do. Tell all of the Jews to pray for me for three days, and neither to eat nor drink. And I and my maidens will also pray and fast. Then I will go in to the king, and if I must die, I must die."

So Esther's cousin went away and did all that Esther had told him to do.

All of the Children of Israel prayed for Esther. They prayed for three days and for three nights, and they neither ate nor drank. And Esther and her maids in the palace prayed for three days and three nights.

And it came to pass on the third day that Esther put on her most beautiful robes and went and stood in the king's room before the king's throne. And everyone was astonished to see her standing there. For all the people knew that no one could come in to the king unless the king sent for him.

Now the king had a long smooth golden stick called a scepter. Everyone watched to see if the king would hold out his scepter to Esther, for unless he did, they all knew that Esther would be killed.

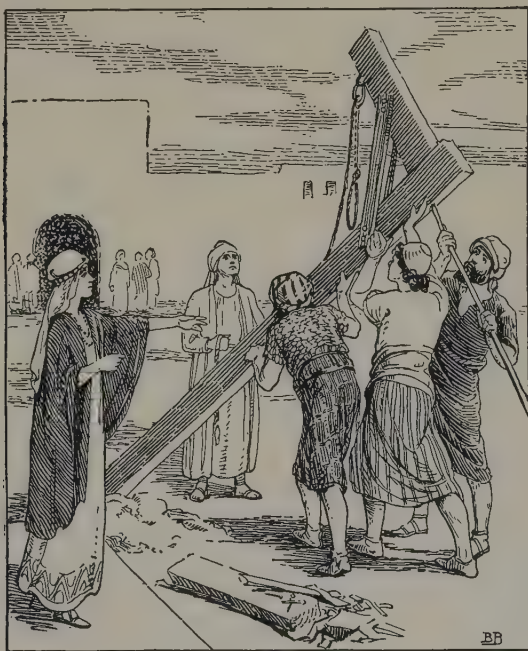
Then the king's servants started forward with their long shining swords to cut off Esther's head. But the king looked at Esther and she was very beautiful and he loved her. So he raised his golden scepter and held it out to her. Then Esther knew that she did not have to die.

So Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter. And the king said: "What is thy wish, Queen Esther? Whatever it is, I will give it, even to the half of my kingdom."

Esther looked at the king and saw the wicked Haman standing there. She did not dare ask the king yet, for she was afraid he would not give her the wish. So she said: "O King, if it pleases you, let the king and Haman come today to a feast which I shall make ready. And then I will tell my wish to the king."

The king said to Haman: "Make haste and come to a feast which Queen Esther has made ready for us." Then Haman was very proud because the queen had asked him to a feast with no one else but the king.

So Haman said to his wife: "This man of the Jews who stands in front of the palace, will never bow to



BUILDING THE GALLOWS.

me. While I am gone, make ready a gallows to hang people on, and I will speak to the king, and he will surely tell me to have this man hanged. For the king is giving me a very great place today, and the queen has invited me to a feast." So Haman's wife got ready a gallows on which to hang Esther's cousin.

Haman came to the feast with the king and with Esther. And when the king had eaten and drunk and his heart was kind toward Esther he said to her again: "What is thy wish, Queen Esther? Surely I shall give it thee, even if it is for half the kingdom."

Esther replied: "O King, I do not ask for half the kingdom. I ask only for my life and the lives of my people. For we have been all given over to be killed, and not one of us can be saved unless the king will grant my wish. Surely the king does not mean to kill the queen in the palace."

The king said to Esther: "Who has done this, and who are thy people?" And Esther answered: "A wicked man has done this, even this man Haman. For my people are the Children of Israel, who are captives in your land."

The king arose in great anger and said: "For what cause has Haman done this? He told me the Jews were a wicked people and ought to be killed."

But Esther answered: "O King, they are not a wicked people. But my cousin stands by the king's gate, and he does not bow to Haman when he passes. And Haman is very proud and very jealous. And for this one thing he would kill a whole people."

Haman was afraid before the king and queen, for he saw that he must die. And the king's servants came in to him and said: "Behold, Haman has made a gallows to hang Esther's cousin on, for he believed the king would give him anything he asked."

This made the king still more angry and he said: "Hang Haman on the gallows that he made for Esther's cousin. And let word be sent through all

the land to all the Jews that if any people try to kill them on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, they must take swords and spears and fight for themselves, and I, the king, will help them."

So Esther, the Jewish maiden, saved all of her people, because she was brave, and was not afraid for her own life.

QUESTIONS

Who was Esther?

What did the great king send all the servants to find?

What did he do with Esther?

Who hated the Children of Israel?

Why did he hate them?

What did Haman ask the king to do?

What did Esther's cousin do when he heard that the Jews were to be killed?

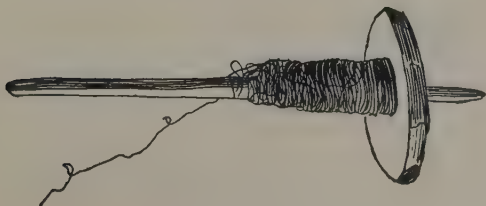
What did he tell Esther to do?

What did Esther promise?

When Esther went in to the king, what did the king do?

What did Esther ask of the king?

What happened to Haman?



THE THIRTY-SEVENTH STORY

DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS



NEBUCHADNEZZAR was a great king who had his kingdom near the land of Judah, where the Children of Israel lived. This king made war on the land of Judah. And the Children of Israel fought long and bravely, but Nebuchadnezzar was too strong for them. He killed their men, carried off their king and some of the golden cups and basins that were kept in the house of God. He also took a great many of the Children of Israel away with him for slaves.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king, said to himself: "What shall I do to the land of Judah, so that they will know that I am their king, and so that they will never fight with me again?" And he thought long about it.

At last he said: "I know what I can do. I will choose out the boys of all the best families, all over the land of Judah. I will take the king's son and the sons of all the greatest and richest men. And I will bring them down here to my own city. I will keep them here with me in my palace. They shall be my servants, but I will treat them kindly and give them a place with all of my own great men. Then

the people of Judah will never fight me any more, for they will see that the boys of their own greatest men are here with me."

So Nebuchadnezzar, the king, said to his chief servant: "Bring in the best and noblest boys in all the land of Judah, the sons of the great men and the rich men. They must be beautiful boys, tall and straight and strong. Then bring teachers for them to teach them our language and all the things that men must know who are to live in the king's palace."

The king's chief servant sent out and took the boys from the Children of Israel, boys who were strong in body and mind, and who could learn to stand before the king. And he sent for teachers to teach them the language and all the wisdom that they must know in order to be wise men.

Then Nebuchadnezzar, the king, said to himself: "I must take good care of all these boys. They shall have the very best things to eat, so that they will be fat and good-looking when they come to stand before me." So he told his servant to take meat and wine from the king's own table, the very best there was, and give it to the boys from the land of Judah.

Now one of the boys was named Daniel. Daniel was a fine strong boy and all of his life he had been told that it was not good for him to drink wine and to eat rich food like the food that the king ate. So Daniel said to himself: "It would be a wrong thing for me to take this food that is sent from the king's table, and to drink the king's wine. What shall I do about it? For the king himself has sent the food and will be angry if I do not eat it."

Then Daniel went to the king's chief servant and said to him: "All of my life I have been taught to eat simple food and not to drink wine. And now I must drink the king's wine and eat the rich food from



DANIEL DECLINES THE KING'S MEAT.

the king's table. Will you not let me do as I have always been taught?"

The king's chief servant answered: "What shall I say to the king? For he sends the best food and wine

from his own table. And when he finds that you are thin and pale, and not as strong as the other boys, then he will say to me, 'Why is Daniel so thin and pale?' And I will have to tell him. He will be angry with us, because we have not done what he told us to do."

Daniel replied to the king's chief servant: "It is not true that rich food and wine will make us fat and good-looking. It would be better for us to have simple food and water."

But the king's chief servant answered: "How shall I know this?"

Then Daniel said: "I have three friends here among the boys who are kept in the palace of the king. They are like me, and they have always eaten simple food. So let it be tried for ten days. Give simple food and water to me and my three friends, but rich food and wine to all the other boys. At the end of ten days we will see who are the fattest and finest looking."

The servant said to himself: "This will be a fine thing, for if it is true as Daniel says, then it will be much cheaper to get simple food and water for the boys, and I can use the rich food and wine for myself."

So the servant tried it for ten days. He gave simple food and water to Daniel and his three friends, and rich food and wine to all the other boys. And when the ten days were over, the servant of the king called all the boys together and said: "Let us see who is the fattest and strongest."

All this time Daniel and his three friends were learning a great many things. They grew very wise and God was with them. And after a while they

knew everything that the king had said they must know.

At the end of the time the boys were all brought before the king. The king talked to them to see how much they knew. And of all the boys, none knew as much as Daniel and his three friends. So the king said: "Daniel and his three friends know more than all of my wise men and all of my magicians. They shall stand before me and be my wise men and magicians. And I will make them all very great."

Nebuchadnezzar the king gave new names to all of Daniel's three friends. He called them Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And he made them rulers in his kingdom. But because Daniel was the wisest of all, he made him a wise man and magician, and kept him in the king's own palace.

After a while Nebuchadnezzar the king did a very foolish thing. He said to himself: "I desire that everyone in all the land shall know that I am king and that he must do as I say, no matter what it is." So he made a statue of gold that was very high and very wide, and he set it up in the field. Then he sent to gather together all of his chief men, his princes and his captains and his rulers.

And Nebuchadnezzar the king said to them: "This is my command, O princes and rulers and captains: Send word all through the kingdom to all the people that live in it. When you hear the sound of music, and of playing on the harp and the flute and all kinds of musical things, then everyone in the kingdom shall fall down and worship the golden statue that Nebuchadnezzar, the king, has set up. And whosoever

does not fall down and worship the statue shall be thrown into a blazing, fiery furnace and burnt to ashes."

The princes and the rulers and the captains went all through the land and told it to the people. "Nebuchadnezzar the king has made a golden statue, very high and very wide. And when you hear the sound of the flute and the harp and all kinds of music, you must all bow down to the statue and worship it. And whoever does not bow down to the statue shall be thrown into a blazing, fiery furnace, and burnt to ashes."

So all of the people did as Nebuchadnezzar, the king, had said. Whenever they heard the sound of music, they fell down and worshipped the golden statue. For they did not want to be burnt up in the blazing, fiery furnace.

But do you suppose that Daniel and his three friends were going to pray to a golden statue? Of course not. Daniel was away on a journey so he did not have to say what he would do. But Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said in their hearts that they would never pray to any one but God.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego knew that it would not be right for them to bow down before the golden statue and pray to it, for they knew that they must pray to God and not to idols. So they said to themselves: "We will not bow down and worship the golden statue that the king has put up in the field."

The princes and the rulers and the captains came to King Nebuchadnezzar and said: "O King, live for ever!" That was what they used to say to kings

when they were beginning a speech to him. And this was their speech: "O King, you made a golden statue, very high and very wide, and you said that all of the people should bow down to it and worship it when they heard the sound of music. And now there are three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who will not bow down to the golden statue. So let them be thrown into the blazing fiery furnace, as the king has said."

Then the king sent for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and said to them: "What is this that I hear? Do you mean to obey your king, or is it that you have forgotten? Now if you are ready, at the time when you hear the flute and the harp and all kinds of music, to bow down and worship the golden statue that I have set up, then you shall live. But if you do not bow down, then you shall be thrown in the same hour into the middle of the blazing, fiery furnace, and where is there any god who can save you then?"

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered the king: "O King, we do not need to answer you in this. For you yourself know that we worship another God and that we will not bow down to your golden statue. And if He wishes to, our God is great enough to save us even in the blazing, fiery furnace. But if He does not wish it, then we must die, for whatever happens to us, we will not bow down and worship your statue."

Nebuchadnezzar, the king, was very angry and he commanded his servants to heat the fiery furnace seven times as hot as it was usually heated. And he took

his strongest soldiers and said to them: "Bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego with heavy ropes and throw them into the middle of the furnace."

So the strong men took ropes and bound Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego so that they could not move, and threw them into the very middle of the fiery furnace. And because the furnace was heated seven times as hot as it was usually made, the fire blazed out and burned up the men who came there to throw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in. It burned them up even when they stood a long way off, because it was so very hot.

Nebuchadnezzar, the king, came to look at the fiery furnace. And when he looked he was very much surprised.

He turned to the men that stood near and said to them: "Did we not tie three men with ropes and throw them into the middle of the furnace? And now behold, there are four men walking around in the furnace, and the fourth is bright and shining, like a son of the gods."

The princes and the rulers and the captains came near and looked in, and said: "It is true, O King." And they were all surprised and wondered how it had happened.

Then the king came near to the door of the fiery furnace and said: "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth and come hither." So Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came forth out of the middle of the furnace and they went to the king.

And the king said to his princes and his rulers and

his captains: "This is a strange thing. For the fire has not hurt their bodies, and the hair of their head has not been burnt, and their clothes are not burnt, and there is not even a smell of fire on them." And all the princes, captains and rulers saw that it was so.

So Nebuchadnezzar, the king, said: "Great is the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has



THE FIERY FURNACE

saved his servants in the middle of the fiery furnace, because they did what was right and would not worship any other god."

And Nebuchadnezzar sent word all through his kingdom and said: "I will make it a law, and all the people shall know, that any man who speaks against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut to pieces and his house shall be torn down. For there is no other god who can do such great things."

Then the king Nebuchadnezzar set Shadrach, Mesh-

ach and Abednego on high in his kingdom, and he made them rulers and mighty men. And they were great and happy to the end of their days.

QUESTIONS

What did Nebuchadnezzar, the king, do to the land of Israel?

Whom did he bring down with him to his palace?

Why would Daniel and his friends not eat the rich food and drink the wine of the king?

What happened to them because of it?

Why did the king give Daniel and his three friends a high place in his kingdom?

What foolish thing did the king say that everyone should do?

Why would not the three friends do it?

What did the king do to them?

What happened to the soldiers who threw the three friends into the furnace?

What happened to the three friends?

What did Nebuchadnezzar, the king, do?



THE THIRTY-EIGHTH STORY

THE BOY WHO WENT AMONG LIONS



DO you not like the last story about Daniel?

This is another story about him. When Nebuchadnezzar, the king, found that Daniel was the wisest of all the boys, he said: "I will send and bring the very wisest men and magicians of all the kingdom here to the palace, and they shall teach Daniel, for I know that when he grows up he will be greater than all of them."

So the king sent and brought the wisest men and the greatest magicians of all the land, and said to them: "Teach Daniel everything you know. For when he grows up he will be wisest of all the men in my land."

Then the wise men taught Daniel everything they knew. They taught him all about dreams and what dreams mean, and they taught him all about the stars and what the stars mean. They taught him all the wisdom that they could teach him.

After a while the king began to have bad dreams. He sent for his wise men to explain the dreams and none of them could explain them. And at last the king dreamed a dream that frightened him very

much, but when he woke up he had forgotten what it was about.

The king sent to his wise men, and said: "I have dreamed a dream that frightens me. Tell me now what it means." The wise men answered: "What was the dream?" And the king could not tell. So the wise men said: "We cannot say what the dream means until we know what you dreamed."

This made the king very angry, for he did not like to have his wise men say that they would not do what he wished, so he answered: "None of you are any good. I will have you all killed, and get other wise men."

Then some one came and told Daniel and said: "The king is going to kill all his wise men, because they cannot tell him about his dream."

So Daniel arose and went to the king and said: "Why did you not come to me about your dream? It is a dreadful thing to kill all those men just because they cannot guess what you dreamed about. For the things that you dream when you are alone on your bed, how should any one know what they are? But I have been shown your dream, and I will tell it, for it is a message from God to you, O King."

Then the king said: "Tell it to me, Daniel."

And Daniel said: "O King, you saw in your dream a great statue. It was very bright and very terrible. The head was of fine gold, the breast and arms of silver, the stomach of brass, the legs of iron, but the feet were of clay. And you saw that a stone came and cut through the feet of the statue and it fell. And the wind blew it all away."

The king said: "O Daniel, you have told me the dream, but what was the meaning of it?"

Then Daniel answered: "The statue is your kingdom. You, O King, are like the golden head, very



DANIEL AMONG LIONS

rich and very great. But after you there will come another king, and he shall be like the arms of silver. He shall not be as great as you. And the third kingdom shall be like brass, and shall be over all the earth.

And the fourth shall be strong as iron. But the fifth kingdom shall be like clay, and a strong king shall come against it and shall break it to pieces. And then the kingdom will be scattered all over the earth, as if the wind had blown it, and it shall never be seen again."

The king said: "O Daniel, there is no one as wise as you. You shall be chief among my wise men." So the king saved the lives of all his wise men, but he made Daniel greatest among them, because Daniel had told him his dream.

When Daniel was made the chief of all the wise men about the king, you may be sure that the other wise men did not like it. They said: "Daniel is only a boy. How should he know as much as we?" So they hunted for ways to have Daniel killed.

But the king was a good friend of Daniel. Every year he gave him a greater place in his kingdom, till Daniel was almost next to the king himself. Then all the men in the kingdom who wanted to be chief men got together and said: "This must not be. Daniel is one of those Children of Israel. He must not be higher and greater than we. What is there that we can tell the king about Daniel?"

They hunted for something that Daniel did that was bad, so that they could tell the king and have Daniel killed. But they never could find anything bad that Daniel did. For Daniel was a good man. He loved God and did whatever God told him to do.

Then these wicked men said: "We shall never find anything bad against Daniel, and what shall we do?" And one of them said: "I know what we can do.

Daniel is one of the Children of Israel and he prays to God. We will go to the king and have him make a law that no one shall pray to any god except the king, for a whole month. Then we will see if Daniel will do as the king says."

So they went to the king and said: "O King, you are a great king. It is not right that anyone in your kingdom should obey anyone but you. So now make a law that no one in all the kingdom shall pray to any god except to you, for the time of a whole month. For you shall be the god of the people."

The king said: "It shall be done as you say. I will be the god of all my people. They shall obey me just as they would obey God. And now make a law to try my people. Whoever shall pray to any god except the king for the time of a whole month, shall be thrown into the den of lions." So they wrote out the law and the king signed his name to it. And they sent it all through the land, from north to south and from east to west.

This was a very foolish thing for the king to do, was it not? But the king did not know any better. He did not know about the true God that Daniel prayed to, and he was very proud and thought he could be god just as well as not.

And when Daniel heard that the king had made this law, what do you suppose he did? He was very sorry that the king had said it, for he loved the king, and wanted to obey him, but he was not going to pray to the king. So Daniel did just as he had always done before. Three times every day he went up to his house, and opened the windows towards his

own home country, the land of Judah. Then he knelt down and prayed to God to take care of his country. And he thanked God for all the kind things that He had done for him, and for making him so great before the king.

Daniel did this just the same after the king had made the law as he had done before. And the wicked men hid themselves where they could see Daniel praying. And as soon as they saw that Daniel was not keeping the king's law, they went to the king.

"O King," they said: "Did you not make a law that no man should pray to any god but you for the time of a whole month, and that any man who prayed to any other god should be thrown into the den of lions?"

The king answered: "The thing is true, and the law cannot be changed. Is there any man who has not kept the law?"

The men said: "O King, there is Daniel, of the Children of Israel from the land of Judah. He does not obey you and he does not obey the law that you have made, but he prays three times a day to his God. And we have all seen and heard him."

The king was very sad, for he loved Daniel and saw how very foolish he had been to make such a law. He knew that Daniel was a good man, and that Daniel loved the king better than all these wicked men did. He knew that these men had made the law on purpose to kill Daniel. So all that day, till the going down of the sun, the king tried to save his friend. He tried this way, and he tried that way, but there was not any way.

At evening time all the wicked men came to him and said: "O King, the law is written down and cannot be changed. Daniel must be thrown into the den of lions."

The king told his servants to bring Daniel. And the king said to Daniel: "My heart is very sad within me, for you have been a true servant of the king's. But the law is written and cannot be changed. And if I had known how it would happen, I would never have written such a foolish law. But now perhaps your God will save you from the lions, for you have been very true to Him."

So the king went with Daniel and the wicked men to the door of the lion's den. The lions were kept for the king to look at when he wanted to watch some animals. And whenever any man had to be killed, the king used to throw him to the lions and watch the lions eat him. So all the wicked men thought to themselves: "What fun it will be to see Daniel eaten by the lions."

But the king did not want to watch the lions eat Daniel. He felt very sorry for him. So as soon as he had put Daniel in the den with the lions, he closed the gate and fastened it with the king's own fastening, that no one else could open it and look in.

All night the king stayed in his palace, and he could not sleep. He did not have any feast nor any music. He sent away all the people who were coming to the palace to have a great banquet. He would not see any of the wicked men who had made him write that foolish law. But he lay on his bed alone all night, and would not eat nor sleep.

The next morning the king rose up early and went to the den of lions. On the way he wondered what he would find. He thought that he might find Daniel's bones, and that then he would have them taken out and buried. But he thought that perhaps the lions had eaten all the bones too. For sometimes the lions were very hungry.

As soon as the king came near the den and opened it, he called out with a sad voice: "O Daniel, servant of God, is the God that thou servest able to deliver thee from the lions?"

And what do you think he heard?

The voice of Daniel answered him from the den: "O King, God has saved me from the teeth of the lions. All night long have I been here and they have not harmed me. For God knew that I had served Him well. And you too, O King, you know that I have done you no evil."

Then the king was very glad and commanded his servants to take Daniel out of the lions' den. So they took him out. And the king said to him: "O Daniel, did the lions do you any harm at all?"

And Daniel answered: "You see yourself, O King, that they have not hurt me nor touched me, but God has saved me from them."

The king sent his servants and told them to bring all the wicked men who had tried to have Daniel killed. And all of the wicked men came. And when they saw Daniel standing there alive they wondered what this might mean.

The king said to them: "You wicked men, you wished to kill Daniel. And you asked me to write a

foolish law because you knew Daniel would obey God instead of me. And now the God whom Daniel obeys, has saved him out of the den of lions."

Then the king told his servants to take all those wicked men, and throw them to the lions. And they did so. And the lions took them and tore them all to pieces and ate them up. Before they had reached the bottom of the den they were all dead.

But the king gave Daniel a high place among his men, and made him the greatest man in all the kingdom except only the king himself. For he knew that Daniel was wise and good. So Daniel lived happily to the day of his death.

QUESTIONS

What did the king do with Daniel?

What made the king angry with his wise men?

How did Daniel save the lives of the wise men?

What did Nebuchadnezzar dream and what did it mean?

What made the wise men hate Daniel?

What law did the king make?

Did Daniel do what the king had said?

Why would Daniel not stop praying to God?

What did the wicked men tell the king he must do to Daniel?

Did the king want to do it?

Did the lions eat Daniel?

What did the king do to the wicked men?

THE THIRTY-NINTH STORY

A COUSIN OF JESUS



ZACHARIAS was the name of a man who lived almost two thousand years ago. He was a good man, and he was a priest of God. He used to go into the great, white temple that had been built in the city of Jerusalem. There he would burn sweet-smelling things in front of the altar, and when he saw the smoke go up, he prayed to God for the people. He wanted his prayers to go up to God just the way the smoke was going.

Zacharias had a wife. Her name was Elizabeth. She was a good woman. She loved God and she did everything she thought God wanted her to do. And all her life long she prayed to God for a baby boy, but she never had one.

Elizabeth wanted a son very much, but it was not only for herself that she wanted him. The country where she lived was an unhappy country. There was a great emperor who lived a long way off, and he ruled over the land where Elizabeth lived, and was not kind to the people. He made them give him a great deal of money, and he treated them cruelly.

So Elizabeth used to say to herself: "If I had a son,

I would teach him to love the poor people in this country, and to fight for them. Perhaps he would lead a great army and set the people free.”

All the priests who lived near the temple used to take turns burning the sweet-smelling stuff and praying for the people. One day it came Zacharias' turn.



ZACHARIAS AND THE ANGEL

So Zacharias put on his long white robes, the kind of clothes that the priests wore, and went into the temple.

He went through the great gate that was in the temple wall, and all the people bowed to him as he

passed. Then he went into the holy room where only the priests could come, and there stood a large altar, made of cedar-wood all covered over with gold. Zacharias stood before the altar and took some sweet-smelling stuff called incense and burnt it on the altar.

All the people outside were praying, and waiting for Zacharias to come out to speak to them, and to tell them what words God wanted them to hear. Zacharias was praying too. He was praying that God would be kind to the people, and send them some one to lead their armies and set them free from the stranger king.

After a while he began praying that he might have a son, a baby boy who would grow up to help the poor people. Then all of a sudden he lifted up his eyes, and saw—what do you suppose? He saw an angel standing there right next to the golden altar.

Zacharias was afraid when he saw the angel. There was not anything that Zacharias had done to make him afraid. Zacharias had been a good man, and he loved God. Should you not think he would have been pleased instead of frightened when God sent an angel to speak to him? But Zacharias was afraid.

The angel said: "Do not fear, Zacharias, for thy prayers are heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall have a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and God will be with him and make him strong and brave, even from the time he is born until he dies."

Then Zacharias was glad that the angel had prom-

ised him just what he wanted most, a son who would help the poor people and be a strong man for them.

Then the angel said: "He shall turn many of the Children of Israel to God. He shall love God and obey Him, and shall walk before God as a brave man, and he shall make wicked men stop doing their wicked deeds. He shall make ready for the Lord an obedient people."

But Zacharias began to wonder in his heart, and he said: "How can this happen? For I am an old man, and my wife Elizabeth is old, and we have never had any children yet. How can I know this?"

And Zacharias said to the angel: "How can I be sure that you are telling me the truth? I am an old man and my wife is old. We are too old to expect children any more."

The angel answered and said unto him: "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak unto thee, and to bring thee these good tidings. And behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak, until the day when these things shall come to pass, because thou believest not my words."

Then the angel went up to heaven and left Zacharias standing there. And Zacharias started to speak to the angel before he went. But he could not say a word. Everything had happened just as the angel had said. Because Zacharias had not believed the good news, he had to be dumb until everything happened that the angel said was going to happen. That was to be the sign to make him believe.

All this time the people were waiting outside for Zacharias to come out and speak to them. They said

to each other: "Why is Zacharias staying so long in the temple? No priest ever stayed as long as that before. If he does not come out soon, the people will all go away."

Finally Zacharias came out of the holy place where



ZACHARIAS COMING FROM THE TEMPLE.

only the priests could go, and he went to the outside part of the temple where all the people were. They waited for him to speak. But when he tried to talk, no words came. He could not speak to them.

From this they knew that he had seen a vision in the temple. He kept making signs to them, but he was dumb. So the people said to each other: "What has happened to Zacharias? What special word did God say to him? We wish he could tell us." But he could not tell them, so at last they all went home, and wondered what had happened.

Zacharias went home too. And before a year was over, his wife Elizabeth had a baby boy. When all the neighbors heard it, they were very glad, for they all loved Elizabeth. They knew what a good, kind woman she was, and they knew how much she had wanted a baby. So they were very happy. All of Elizabeth's relatives came to tell her how happy they were.

When the baby was eight days old, the time came to name it. And everyone said: "We must call him Zacharias after his father." But Elizabeth said: "No, you must call his name John." They were very much surprised and said to her: "Why shall we call him John? There is no one in the family with that name."

So they went to Zacharias and asked him by signs what the name of the baby boy should be. Then Zachariah made motions that he wanted to write. So they brought him a writing tablet, and he wrote on it: "His name is John." And everyone was surprised.

As soon as Zacharias had given the boy his right name, the name the angel had said he must be called, he could speak. For everything had happened as the angel had said, and now Zacharias had done as the angel told him to do. So he opened his mouth and

began to speak, and to thank God for His great kindness in sending him a son.

Then everyone was afraid. And they told all the people in the town, and all the people in the country, what had happened to Zacharias. Everyone knew that the boy John was going to be a wonderful man when he grew up.

In the midst of his thanksgiving Zacharias began to speak a very beautiful song. Sometime perhaps you will hear it sung in church, for many church choirs sing it. This is the song:

“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his
people,
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of his servant David.
Salvation from our enemies
And from the hand of all that hate us.
That we, being delivered from the hands of our
enemies,
Should serve him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before him all our days.”

Then the poem told what John would do and what a great man he should be:

“And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the
Most High,
For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make
ready His ways:
To give knowledge of salvation unto His people,
In the remission of their sins,

Because of the tender mercy of our God
Whereby the dayspring from on high shall visit us,
To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the
shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace."

Elizabeth and Zacharias took good care of John and brought him up to be a great man of God. He never drank wine or strong drink, and he never ate rich food, but he lived in the desert country, and ate wild honey and simple food. And because he lived in the desert, he grew strong and brave. He wore skins made of the wild animals he had killed, and he spent his days thinking about God and wondering what he could do to help the people.

After a while, when he grew older, John began preaching. He preached such wonderful sermons that thousands and thousands of people went out to the desert to hear him. He preached to them and said: "Repent, and stop doing wicked deeds, for the time is near when the great man of God will come, for whom all the people are waiting. He will be king of the whole world. But you must make your hearts ready."

Then the people began to think that John himself was the great man of God who would do all this. And they asked him, saying: "Art thou he that shall come, or shall we look for another?"

John answered them by saying: "I am only a voice crying in the desert: 'Make ready for the coming of the Lord!' I am not the great man of God myself, but I am sent to get ready for him, for he is coming soon."

John was such a brave man that he told the king himself not to do wrong things. And the king was angry and put John in prison. All of this happened when John grew up, and you will hear of it in another story, the story of the wicked princess, Salome.

QUESTIONS

Who was Zachariás?

What did his wife want most of all?

Why did she want a son?

What did Zacharias do when he went in to the house of God?

What happened to him there?

What did the angel promise him?

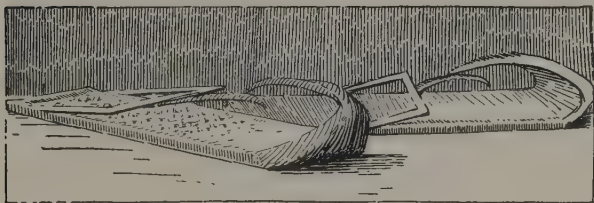
What sign did the angel give Zacharias that his promise would come true?

What did the people think when Zacharias could not speak to them?

What did Zacharias call the boy that was born?

What sort of a man was John when he grew up?

What did Zacharias make a song about?



THE FORTIETH STORY

THE BIRTH OF JESUS



MARY is the name of a beautiful maiden who lived in a little town called Nazareth. She was not only beautiful, but she was very wise and very good. She loved God and prayed to God very often. One day, when she had been praying, she lifted up her eyes and what do you think she saw? An angel. A beautiful, white angel with long, white wings.

Do you remember the angel that went to Zacharias and promised him a son? Well, this was the same angel. When Mary saw the angel she was much surprised and just a little afraid, for she did not know what the angel wanted of her.

The angel said to her: "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt have a son and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and he shall be called the son of the Most High. And God shall give to him the throne of David, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Then Mary bowed herself low before the angel and said: "I am the servant-maid of God; let it be with me as He wills." Then the angel left her, and went back to heaven.



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THE ANNUNCIATION.

Mary thought for a long time of the little son that was to be born to her, and the more she thought, the happier she grew. All the people in the whole land had been waiting for years and years and hundreds of years for a great man of God. He was to be the greatest man of God that there ever was or ever could be. He was going to tell people all about God, and show people what kind of a person God was like. He was to be just like God Himself living on earth. So when the angel said to Mary that her son should be called the "son of the Most High," Mary knew that her baby boy would be the great man of God for whom everyone had been waiting.

A little while after this, Mary was married to a man named Joseph. He was a very good, kind man, a carpenter. He lived in the town of Nazareth where Mary lived, not far from a beautiful lake. But years and years before, Joseph's father and grandfather had lived somewhere else. They had lived in Bethlehem.

Did you ever hear about Bethlehem? Bethlehem was the place where David, the shepherd boy, lived—the boy who killed the giant and afterwards became king. David was Joseph's great-great-ever-so-many-great-grandfather. That was why Joseph used to live in Bethlehem.

One day the great king of all the land sent out word to the people, and said: "Let everyone go back to the town where he came from and where his fathers lived. For I want to have a list made of all the people there are in the land, and of the places from which they came."

So all the people in all the land made a journey back to the places they had come from. And Joseph put his wife Mary on a mule and went with her many miles away. What town did Joseph have to go to? Yes, Bethlehem. So he rode south and south for ever so many miles, till he came one evening, just as the sun went down, to the town of Bethlehem.

Mary was very tired after her long journey, and Joseph began to look around for some place where they could stay all night. But there were no people left in Bethlehem that Joseph knew. He had gone out from Bethlehem a long time before.

So Joseph went to the inn that stood just by the gate of the town, and he said: "We have traveled many miles today and my wife is very tired. Is there any room where we may stay for the night?"

But the inn-keeper answered Joseph: "There are so many people coming back to Bethlehem these days that all of the house is taken. There is no place for you and your wife. You must go somewhere else."

Joseph answered: "There is no other place to go. It is late and the sun has gone down and my wife is very tired. Is there not some little corner of the house where we can go, just long enough to spend the night? All we need is a place to lie down and sleep till the morning."

Then the inn-keeper answered: "There is no place at all in the house, but if you want some straw to sleep on, you can go to the stable. It is the only empty place there is."

Joseph went back to Mary and said: "There is no place for us in the house, but we can have some straw

in the barn to sleep on. It will be better than nothing."

And Mary said: "Yes, it will be better than lying out in the cold night on the desert, for I am very tired."

So they went into the stable where all the animals were kept, and they found a nice, warm place over in one corner where there was plenty of straw. They lay down on the straw to sleep. And that very night, out in that stable, the little baby boy that the angel had promised to Mary was born. Mary wrapped him up warm and laid him in a manger. Do you know what a manger is? It is the place where the food is put for the cows to eat. Mary put the baby in the manger because there was no other place to put him.

This same night, out in the desert country near Bethlehem there were some shepherds. They were sleeping on the ground and keeping watch over their sheep. They had found a green spot of grass, and so they had stopped there for the night. Some of them had gone to sleep and some of them had made a little fire to keep themselves warm, and were sitting up to watch the sheep.

. All of a sudden a great light shone around them. The shepherds who were awake jumped to their feet and ran to the others and woke them, crying: "See the great light that is shining around us. What shall we do, for we are afraid?"

Then the other shepherds rose up and rubbed their eyes. At first they thought they must be dreaming, for there was such a wonderful golden light all around. But as soon as they knew that they were

not dreaming, then they were very much afraid. Would you not be afraid, if you should wake up out of doors some night, in the very middle of the night, and see a bright golden light all around you?

But the next thing they saw made them even more afraid. For right in the middle of the light stood an angel. It was a great, white angel with white wings. The shepherds all fell on their faces before the angel, for they thought he had surely come to kill them.

But the angel said to them: "Be not afraid; for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in baby-clothes and lying in a manger."

Then suddenly there were with the angel a great many other angels from heaven. There were so many that they stretched up and up and up to the sky, all golden in the bright light around the shepherds. And they sang:

"Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

Some day you will hear the song that the angels sang. For in almost every church they sing that song at Christmas. For Christmas is when we have the birthday of Jesus Christ, the baby that was born in Bethlehem so many years ago. That is what Christmas means.

After the angels had sung that song, they went away into heaven, up and up and up until there was not one of them left. Then the shepherds rose from the ground where they had fallen and wondered what all this might mean. And one of them said: "Let us go now even to Bethlehem and see the thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

They did not even stop to take care of their sheep, and they did not leave anyone there to watch, for the thing that had happened was so very important. They hurried straight to Bethlehem to find the baby that had been born.

They went one by one to all the houses in town and said: "Is there any baby born tonight in your house?" But everyone said, no. And at last they came to the inn. It was the very last place of all.

They said to the inn-keeper: "Is there any baby born here tonight?" And he answered, no. Then the shepherds said: "It must be here that the baby was born, for we have asked at every house in the town, and no one knows anything about it. But an angel came to us in the fields and told us that the great man of God, for whom everyone has been waiting so many hundred years, is born tonight in Bethlehem."

Just as soon as they said that, one of the shepherds remembered what else the angel had told them, and he said: "The angel said we should find the baby in a manger. Are you sure there is no baby in your stable?"

The inn-keeper answered: "There was a man and his wife who came here late this evening and they are sleeping in the stable. You can go out and see."

So the shepherds went out to the stable. And what did they find? They found Mary, and Joseph, and the little baby Jesus lying in a manger. And Mary said: "Who are you, and why have you come here in the middle of the night?"

The shepherds told Mary all that had happened. And they said: "We saw a very bright light shining around us, and an angel in the midst of the light. And behind the angel were many other angels, reaching up to heaven. They all sang a beautiful song:

Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men, in whom He is
well pleased.

"The angel told us to come to Bethlehem, the city of David. He told us that here was born this night the great man of God for whom all the people are waiting. And he gave us this sign: 'Ye shall find the babe lying in a manger.' "

When Mary heard this she was very happy, for she knew that she had not been mistaken in what the angel had told her, and that her baby was really going to be the greatest man of God that there ever was or ever can be. So she lifted the baby up out of the manger and showed him to the shepherds who were gathered about.

All of the shepherds knelt around the baby and thanked God. Then they said good-bye to Mary and went back to their sheep. But all the way they talked to one another about the wonderful things that they had seen that night. They thanked God over and over again, because now at last the man of God, for

whom everyone had been waiting, had come, and they had lived to see him.

Mary and Joseph stayed with their little baby boy in Bethlehem for eight days. Then Joseph said to Mary: "It is time to take the baby to the house of God, to give him to God and to name him." So they took the baby up to the house of God and they called his name Jesus, as the angel had told them.

And Mary brought two little doves to sacrifice on the altar to God, to show how happy she was that God had given her a son. That was what they always did in those days, when a baby boy was born.

While they were waiting there in the house of God, an old man came up to them. His name was Simeon. He was a very good man and he went very often to the house of God to pray. All of his life he had been waiting and hoping for the great man of God that the people wanted. And at last God had told him that before he died, he should see the man of God.

That very day Simeon came up to the house of God to pray. While he was there he saw Mary and her baby boy. And all at once Simeon knew that this was the baby for whom he had been waiting and hoping so many years.

So Simeon went over to Mary and took the baby in his arms. Then he prayed to God and thanked Him, because he had lived to see the great man of God. And he said that now he had lived long enough and was ready to die. These were the words he said:

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to thy word, in peace.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all
peoples."

When Simeon said these words, Mary and Joseph were very much surprised. And they asked him what this might mean. But Simeon said: "Behold, this child shall be a great man of God in Israel, and he shall divide all the people. For those that are good shall love him, but those that are evil shall hate him



ANNA'S PROPHECY.

and seek to kill him. And great sorrow shall come upon thee, his mother, because of the things which evil men shall do to him."

While Simeon was speaking, there came up an old woman, whose name was Anna. She was a good woman, and she spent every day in the house of God, praying that the great man of God might come soon.

As soon as she saw the child, she also gave thanks to God and said: "This is the child for whom all the people have been waiting."

So Mary knew that the things that the angel had said to her were true, and that her baby was to be the greatest man of God that there ever was or ever can be. For he would show people what kind of a person God was like, and how God loved them.

QUESTIONS

Who was the mother of Jesus?

How did Mary know she was going to have a great man of God for her son?

How did Mary happen to be in Bethlehem?

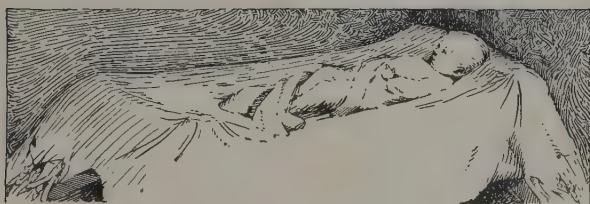
Who were the first people that knew about Jesus outside his family?

How did they find out?

Where did they find the baby boy?

Why was Jesus in a manger?

What happened when Mary took Jesus up to the house of God?



THE FORTY-FIRST STORY

THE WISE MEN



WHEN Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there lived three wise men. They lived far away in the East, where all of the wise men lived, and they were very, very wise. Some people say that they were kings who spent all their time studying how to be wise men. But nobody knows whether they were kings or not.

Even if they were not kings, they must have been very great, for they had much gold and many precious things. And they spent all their time watching the stars to find out what was going to happen.

These three wise men were very good men. For years and years they had thought about God and learned about Him. They knew all that all the wisest men had ever written about God. They knew what the men of the East had written, and what the men of the South had written and what the men of the North had written. And they knew that the Children of Israel had been waiting for hundreds of years for

a great man of God, who should tell them about God and show them what God was like.

One night when one of the wise men was watching the sky, he suddenly saw a star that he had never seen before. He looked at it for a long time. The star grew brighter and brighter. He looked through all his books and there was nothing in them about this star.

At last he said: "It must be a new star that has never been seen before. For I know all the stars there have been. I wonder what the new strange star can mean."

All night he thought and thought, and the next morning he went to see the other wise men.

He came to one of them and said: "Did you see that star last night? It was far down in the west, just after the sun had set."

Then the other wise man answered: "It was the brightest star in all the sky, and it is a new star. I wonder what it can mean."

So they went together to the third wise man. He was the oldest wise man of all and he was very, very wise. There was nothing in all the earth that he did not know. As soon as they reached his house, they found him standing by the door, with a great, white camel. His servants were putting food and drink and many precious things on the camel. He looked as if he were just starting out on a long journey.

"Did you see the wonderful star last night?" the two wise men asked him.

Then the oldest and the wisest man of all answered: "I have waited for this star for many years. It is a sign from God. Far away to the west, in the land of

Israel, there has been born the great man of God, for whom all the world has been waiting. He is to be king of the whole world, and that is why this star has come for a sign of his birth."

The other wise men said: "Let us go with you, that we also may see this great king." So they went quickly back to their homes and took food and drink and gold and precious things, and packed it all on camels. Then they came back to the oldest and wisest man of all and he was just ready to start. So they went across the desert to the land of Israel.

They went west and west and west for many days. The light of the star shone before them every night, growing brighter and brighter all the time. They were going through the desert country, where all of the stars shone very brightly, but this was the brightest of all.

After many days they came to the land of Israel. Then they said to each other: "The star was shining over the land of Israel, but how do we know where in all the land the great king is to be born? For the last two nights the star has stopped shining, and we do not know where to go."

So they thought for a while and at last they said: "We will go to the city of the great King Herod. Surely the new king will be born in his palace." So they went to the City of Jerusalem where King Herod lived.

When they came near the city, they met a woman sitting by a well. She was the first person they had seen, so they said to her: "Is this Jerusalem?" and she answered: "Yes."

Then they asked her: "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" But the woman looked at them as if she did not know what they were talking about. "I have heard of no king of the Jews except Herod," she said, "and he has no baby boy."

So the wise men said: "Tell everyone that we are looking for the new king of the Jews, for we saw his star in the east, and we have come to worship him." Then they went on to the city.

They asked the same question of everyone they saw, but no one seemed to know of any new king. They asked the soldiers, and they asked the priests, and they asked the people in the streets, but no one knew. At last it was night. Then the wise men said: "Tomorrow we will go to King Herod and ask him."

All that day and all that night, the people in the city were talking about the three wise men and the strange words they had spoken.

"They say the Christ is born," said the people to each other. "The great man of God who will save us from the wicked King Herod and make us a free people. Did you not see the wise men from the East who had come to find our new king?"

"When did they come?" said the people who had not heard the news.

"They came here just this afternoon. They must be very great and rich men, for they sat under a shade of silk, and the buckles on their saddles were of gold. They had large white camels, the finest we have ever seen. They looked as if they had come from very far away. And no one could tell them what they asked. But tomorrow they will see Herod."

So all the people talked till the news was brought to King Herod himself. And how do you suppose he felt about it? Was he happy, like the rest of the people, because a new king was born? No, he was very much afraid. For he said: "This new king will take away the kingdom from me, if I let him live to grow up. I must kill him while he is still a baby."

The very next morning Herod sent to the wise men and asked them to come to the palace. They saddled their white camels and put their gold and precious things on them and went to see the king. And Herod called together all the chief men of the city, and all the priests from the house of God.

When they were all come together King Herod said: "O priests, who know what is written in the book of God, tell us where the men of God, in the long years ago, have said that the Christ-child should be born. For this new king must be the Christ, for whom you have been waiting these many years."

Then the priests looked through their big books for a long time. At last they said: "O King, live forever! Our holy books say that the Christ will be born in Bethlehem, the city of David."

Herod turned and said to the wise men: "O great and noble wise men, who have come from the far East to seek for the new king, you have heard what the priests have said. In Bethlehem, the city of David, will the child be found."

Then King Herod sent away the priests, but he kept the wise men with him. And as soon as they were all alone, he asked them, saying: "Tell me, O wise men, what time the star appeared to you,"

The wise men said: "It was only a few weeks ago, O King, for we have journeyed night and day since we saw it."

"Then the child cannot be very old," said the wicked King Herod. And the wise men said: "No, he is only a baby."

So Herod said to the wise men: "Go down to Bethlehem and seek for the child who is to be such a great king. And when you have found him tell me. For I will bring the baby to my palace and take care of him, and teach him all the things that a king should know."

Now why do you suppose King Herod wanted to know all these things? Do you think he was really going to be kind to the little baby? Of course not. Herod was a wicked king and he wanted to kill the baby Jesus, so that there could never be another king besides himself. He wanted the wise men to find Jesus and then tell him just where he was, so that he could kill him.

That evening the wise men started out again, on the way to Bethlehem. And as soon as they had left Jerusalem, they looked up in the sky and what do you suppose they saw? Yes, the star. The star had come back to show them the way to the house where Jesus was. So they thanked God for being so kind to them, and they went quickly till they came to the house where Joseph and Mary were. For Joseph had had time now to find a house where Mary and the little baby could stay. They were not in the stable any more.

The star went before the wise men till it came and

stood over the house. Then the wise men were filled with joy, and they went in. They saw Mary and Joseph and the baby, and knelt down before Jesus, giving thanks to God.

While Mary wondered what this might mean, they said: "This is the new king whose star we saw in the east. We have come to worship him and to bring him presents. For he shall be great and he shall be king of the whole world."

Then the wise men went out to their beautiful, white camels and brought in presents to give to the baby. They gave him presents of gold, and they gave him lovely perfumes that cost a great deal of money, and they gave him very precious things. For they had found the king that they had journeyed so many miles to find.

That night God sent them a dream about the wicked King Herod. An angel stood by them in the dream and said: "Go back to your own country. Do not stop to speak to Herod, and do not tell him anything about the child that you have found. For Herod will not be kind to the new baby king, but will seek to kill him."

The next morning the wise men arose and saddled their camels. They said good-bye to Mary and Joseph, and they knelt very low before the baby king. Then they got on their large, white camels and rode off into the desert as fast as they could go. They did not go back to Jerusalem and they said nothing at all to Herod.

So Herod waited in his palace for the wise men to come back. At last he sent his servants to seek them.



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THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

And his servants brought back word that the wise men had gone and no one knew where they were.

When Herod saw that the wise men were not going to come back to him, he was very angry. He wanted to be sure to kill the new baby that was born in Bethlehem, so that the baby could never be king. But now he did not know where to find the baby. The wise men had been gone for many weeks, and he did not even know how old the baby was.

Herod said to himself: "I know what I will do. I will send my soldiers to Bethlehem and they shall kill all the baby boys in the whole town that are not yet two years old. For surely the baby the wise men came to see cannot be nearly two years old yet."

So the wicked King Herod sent his soldiers to kill all the baby boys in Bethlehem. That was a dreadful thing to do, was it not? All the poor mothers down in Bethlehem were crying, because their babies were killed. They had never done anything for which to be killed. But King Herod was such a wicked king that he did not care about that.

How do you suppose it happened that Jesus was not killed? An angel came to Joseph in a dream and said: "Rise up, O Joseph, and take the young child, and Mary his mother, and go into the land of Egypt for Herod will seek the young child to kill him."

So Joseph arose and took Mary and the baby Jesus, and put them quickly on a mule, and went away by night to the land of Egypt. And he lived in Egypt for several years. He lived there till the wicked, old King Herod was dead, and Herod's son was king instead.

And when Joseph knew that the wicked King Herod was dead, and that there was no one now who would try to kill Jesus, he took Mary and his little boy and went back home with them.

But they did not go back to Bethlehem, for that was not really their home. What was the town where Joseph really belonged? Do you remember? Nazareth. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth for some years with their little son, until he grew up.

QUESTIONS

Who came to see the baby Jesus besides the shepherds?

How did they know where to come?

Why did they go to Jerusalem first to see King Herod?

What did they say to Herod that made him feel badly?

What did Herod want to do to the baby king?

How was he going to get the wise men to help him?

How was it that the wise men found out just exactly where the baby was going to be born?

Why did they not go back to Herod?

What did Herod do in order to be sure to kill the new king?

How did it happen that Jesus was not killed?



THE FORTY-SECOND STORY

THE BOY JESUS



AFTER Joseph and Mary came back from Egypt with their little boy Jesus, they lived for many years in Nazareth. Nazareth was a little town in the hills of Galilee. The country was beautiful, but for a long way around there was only one spring where anyone could get water. Years before when the people who lived in the land were all shepherds, they used to camp around this one little spring. And that was how there happened to be the town of Nazareth, built all around the spring.

Joseph was a carpenter. He used to build furniture for the houses in Nazareth. The houses were all made with flat roofs, and with stairs going up on the outside. So after the day's work was over, Mary and Joseph and Jesus would go up on the roof and watch the sun go down. They would sit on benches made by Joseph. A great many of the people in Nazareth had benches made by Joseph. He also made plows for the farmers.

Sometimes Jesus would go into Joseph's carpenter shop and say: "Can I help you, father?" For Jesus thought it would be great fun to help his father do

some real work. And then Joseph would let Jesus hold his hammer or his nails or something else that he needed, while he worked away making furniture and boxes for people.

But most of the time Jesus helped his mother. There was not very much that he could do in the carpenter's shop when he was so young and when his mother needed some water for the cooking, he said to her: "I will take the pitcher and get it, mother."

Then he took the pitcher on his shoulders and went down to the one little spring that was in the town. There he stopped and put the pitcher down beside the spring on the low stone wall that was built around it. He dipped up water until the pitcher was full, and then he went back slowly up the hill to the house. The big pitcher full of water was a heavy load for a little boy to carry. Are you not glad that you do not have to carry all the water for the house in these days?

After the work was over, Jesus used to play with the other children in Nazareth. He played at doing all the things that the grown-up people really did. He played weddings and funerals and many other games.

When they were playing weddings, all the children came together, in the very center of the town, where the spring of water was, and where the farmers brought all their produce to sell it.

Some of the children made little whistles and played tunes on them, and the other children danced around and around, as if they were having a very good time at a wedding.

If they were playing funerals, they came together

in the same place, and one of the children would be the dead man, and the others would be his family. Then they would cry and scream very loud. By and by the mourners would come in. The mourners were



THE BOY JESUS AT THE SPRING.

people that were paid to cry at funerals, so that there would be plenty of people crying. Some of the children would play being mourners.

There was another kind of game that they used to play. It was like blind-man's-buff, but it was not

quite the same. One of the boys closed his eyes. Then another came up and hit him on the back and said: "Guess who hit you." And if he could guess, then the other boy had to take his place.

All these games Jesus used to play in Nazareth and many others that no one knows about. But sometimes, when the games were over, he went out in the valley below the town and picked beautiful flowers to take to his mother. There were lovely wild flowers that grew in some of the places where just a little water from the stream had trickled through. Jesus knew all about the flowers and just where he could find them. For he loved the flowers very much. He used to think how God must like to make the flowers; they were such very pretty things. He thought that God had made them more beautiful than gold, or silver, or beautiful silks, or any of the things that men had made.

And sometimes, when Jesus did not go out to hunt flowers for his mother, he went up on the high hill back of the town and looked away across the desert. Far, far away he saw the blue waters of the sea. To the south and west there was a great wide plain of desert country, with mountains around it. It was on this very plain that Saul and Jonathan had fought the last fight of their lives. It was very near here that the wicked king Ahab had lived. One of these mountains was the very place where Elijah, the man of God, hid from the wicked king.

Jesus used to look at all these places, and think of the people that had lived hundreds and hundreds of years before in that very land. Then sometimes he

saw great crowds of camels going across the desert to the sea, and carrying precious things to send to the great king at Rome. And every year on the feast days, Jesus saw hundreds of his own people going up to the holy city Jerusalem to the house of God.

Jesus wondered when he would be old enough to go. He was growing to be quite a big boy now, but he had never been away from Nazareth, since the day when Joseph and Mary had brought him back from Egypt. There was no great house of God in Nazareth, where the priests could offer sacrifices on the altar. There was only a little house called a synagogue, where every Sabbath the people came together, and heard the wise men read the Word of God and explain it. But that was not like going up to Jerusalem.

At last one day, when Jesus was twelve years old, his mother said to him: "My son, we will take you up to Jerusalem with us this year." Then Jesus was very happy, for at last he was big enough to go with all the grown-up people to Jerusalem.

Nearly all the people of Nazareth went to Jerusalem for the great feast day. All of the mothers and fathers of his friends went along, and some of the boys he knew who were old enough. They saddled their mules and took food for many days. Then they rode and rode to the south. All day they rode, and the next day and the next day. At night they slept out under the stars.

Finally they came to the great city of Jerusalem. There were high walls around it, and a great many people in it. There were soldiers with swords and

spears, and priests with long, white robes, and there were men who wore little boxes on their heads with the word of God written inside. Jesus had never seen so many people before.

Some of the people found room in the different houses and hotels in Jerusalem. But there was not nearly room enough, for people came from all over



THE BOY JESUS ON THE WAY TO THE TEMPLE.

the world to the feast-day at Jerusalem. So a great many of the people slept out of doors in front of the house of God.

The house of God was the most wonderful thing that Jesus had ever seen. One side of it was toward the east where the sun rose, and this side was covered all over with gold, and shone so that it could be seen for miles and miles. All the other sides were made

of white marble with a great deal of gold. Inside was the altar where the priests offered sacrifices to God.

Next morning the people all over the city began to go home. Mary and Joseph packed up their tent and helped the other Nazareth people get ready, and then they started. The great feast was over. There were hundreds and hundreds of people going out of Jerusalem.

After a while Mary looked around and said: "I wonder where Jesus is? He was here just a little while ago." And Joseph answered: "He must be with some of the other Nazareth people. Some of the boys must be walking together."

So they went till noon. Then Mary said: "I wonder where Jesus is. Surely he would come to us at meal time." But Joseph answered: "He must be eating with one of the other boys. There is no need to worry."

But at last it came time to camp and go to sleep. For the sun was going down very fast. Then Mary said: "Something must have happened to Jesus. We have not seen him all day."

All night long Mary could not sleep, for she wondered what had happened to her boy Jesus. And early the next morning they arose, and packed up their tent, and went all the way back to Jerusalem. They looked around the great city, and in all the streets where they thought that boys would be playing. But none of the boys had seen Jesus.

At last they went up to the house of God, and what do you suppose happened? They found Jesus in the

house of God, listening to all the wise teachers. They were talking to him about God and about the word of God, and he was asking them questions. He asked such very wise questions that all the grown men who heard him were surprised.

Then they began asking questions of him, to see how much he knew. And he answered better than the men who had studied very hard for a great many years. He talked about God, and about the Word of God. And everyone said: "How does this little boy of twelve know so much? Surely he will be a great man of God some day."

Mary said to Jesus: "My son, why hast thou done this? Thy father and I have been seeking thee for days."

But Jesus answered: "Why should you have to seek me? Do you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And by this, of course, he meant the house of God, for he knew that God was his loving father. But Mary and Joseph did not understand what he meant.

Then Jesus left the house of God and went back with them to Nazareth. He lived there for many years. He helped Joseph with the carpenter work, and he helped Mary draw the water from the spring. He was a good boy and his mother was very proud of him.

But very often he went up to the top of the hill back of the town, and looked at the high mountains and the broad plains where the men of God had lived hundreds of years before. Then he thought: "When will there be another man of God to help the people,

and to tell them about God?—for the people are very unhappy because they do not know that God loves them.”

He prayed to God to make him a man of God when he grew up, so that he could help the people. And God made him the greatest man of God that there ever was or ever can be. But that did not happen till after he was grown.

QUESTIONS

Where did Jesus live when he was a boy?

What kind of work did he do?

What kind of games did he play?

What else did Jesus do besides working and playing?

Where did Jesus go when he was twelve years old?

What did he see at Jerusalem that was very beautiful?

What kind of a feast did they have?

What did Jesus like best to do in Jerusalem?

What happened when they all started home?

When did Mary find out that Jesus was not with them?

Where did they find him?

What made everyone think that Jesus would be a great man of God some day?



THE FORTY-THIRD STORY

THE WICKED PRINCESS



ONCE upon a time, in the days when Jesus lived, there was a princess whose name was Salome. She was very beautiful, but she was not a good princess. She did not know anything about God, and she did not want to know.

She cared only for being beautiful, and for having every one praise her and tell her how lovely she was.

The princess lived in the palace of King Herod. King Herod was a very wicked king. He took everything that he wanted, whether it belonged to him or not. He did not care about doing what was right.

Herod's brother had a beautiful wife. And as soon as Herod saw her, he wanted her. So he took her away from his brother without caring at all that it was a very bad thing to do. He said: "I am king, and I can have everything I want."

That was how Salome came to live in the palace. For her mother was the beautiful woman that King Herod stole from his brother. So King Herod became Salome's step-father, because he married her mother.

Salome did not care whether Herod was a good

king or not. She did not even care because he had stolen her mother away from her father. She only wanted to please King Herod, because he was king and could give her anything she wanted. She thought: "I am a very beautiful princess and if I please King Herod, there is no reason why I should not have everything I desire."

But about this time there was a great man of God in Israel. Who was it? No, it was not Jesus this time, but somebody not nearly so great as Jesus. But still he was a very great and brave man. His name was John the Baptist.

Do you remember the story of the boy who was promised to his father by an angel, when the father was praying in the temple, and burning the sweet-smelling incense that the priests burn? Do you remember how his father would not believe the angel's promise, because he was an old man and his wife was an old woman, and they had never had any children? And do you remember how he was dumb till the baby was born, and how they called the baby John?

Well, John the Baptist was that baby boy, but he had grown to be a great man. He lived in the desert by the river Jordan, and he preached to all the people who came to hear him. He told about God and about how wicked the people were and how God was going to punish them.

He preached such wonderful sermons that everyone went out to hear him. And when they heard him, they cried aloud and said: "We have sinned; what shall we do so that God will not punish us?"

Then John said to the people: "You must repent."

Do you know what repent means? It means change your heart. Stop doing wicked things and begin to do good things. So John said to the people: "Repent and prepare yourselves for the great man of God that is coming, who is so much greater than I, that I am not good enough to stoop down and fasten his shoes. He is coming soon; make ready for him."

Do you know whom John meant when he said this? He meant Jesus. And when Jesus came, almost the first thing He did was to go down to the desert where John was. For John had come to get people ready for Jesus.

John was a very brave man. He was not afraid of anyone. He was not even afraid of the wicked King Herod. So when he heard that King Herod had stolen his brother's wife and married her, John preached about it. He told the people that it was very wrong, and that Herod was a wicked king.

When Herod the king heard this, he was angry, and he sent to John and said: "Who are you, and why do you dare to speak such words about me? I will send my soldiers down to put you in prison, unless you take back what you have said."

Do you suppose John was afraid? He went back with the soldiers, and he stood before King Herod's very face, and he told him what he had told the people. "It is not right for thee to have her, O King," he said, "for she is thy brother Philip's wife." And the beautiful woman that Herod had stolen stood near by and heard it all.

King Herod was very angry. But his wife that he had stolen was more angry still. For she was glad



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JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST.

that Herod had taken her. She wanted to be queen and to have her daughter be princess.

So she said to King Herod: "Put him in prison." And Herod put John in prison.

All this time Herod's wife wept in the palace because John was still alive. She said to herself: "What can I do?—for this man is telling Herod not to keep me for his queen. If Herod listens to him, I shall have to leave the palace and I cannot be queen any more."

So Herod's wife called her daughter Salome, and told her what the king had done. And she said: "O Salome, make King Herod kill this man John. For if Herod listens to him, we shall both of us have to leave the palace, and you cannot be princess any more. For John is telling Herod that it is wrong for him to be married to me."

Salome was very proud. The only thing she wanted in all the world was to be a great princess. She did not care how many people she had to kill, if only she could be great. She wanted to have John the Baptist killed because she was afraid of what he would say to King Herod. And she wondered what she could do.

At last she said to herself: "There is one thing that King Herod loves better than anything else, and that is a beautiful woman and beautiful dancing. I will learn to dance a wonderful dance, and he will give me anything I ask him for."

So Salome sent to the stores of the city and bought the most beautiful silken garments and the loveliest silken veils to dance in. She learned a wonderful dance. It was such a wonderful dance that whoever

saw it would not care for right or wrong, or for anything he had ever cared for, but would do whatever the dancer asked him. When Salome had learned this dance, she waited for her chance.



SALOME DEMANDING THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

At last one day King Herod gave a great feast. He invited the chief men of the kingdom and he set before them the most costly foods and precious wines. They drank and they kept on drinking until they were

all beginning to be drunk. And when people are drunk they do not know what they are doing. They will do all kinds of foolish things that they would never think of if they were not drunk.

Then Salome said to herself: "This is my chance." So she put on her silken clothes and hung beautiful, colored veils of silk and silver and gold about her, and went in to the feast. And everyone was astonished at her beauty. Then Herod the king, who was surprised at her appearance, said to her: "Why have you come, O beautiful Salome?"

And Salome answered: "To dance for you, O King, and for all of your guests at this feast. For I know the most wonderful dance that was ever danced on earth."

Herod was pleased and he said: "Dance it for us, Salome." So Salome gathered her silken veils in her hands, all shining with silver and gold, and she danced before the king. As she danced she tossed the colored silken veils around her head and around her feet, till the king and all his guests were dizzy from looking at them.

Then all the guests at the feast shouted for Salome, and King Herod said: "O beautiful princess, ask whatsoever thou wilt, and it shall be given thee, even to the half of my kingdom."

Salome arose, and smiled at the king, and said: "Give me, O king, the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

Then Herod was sorry that he had made the promise. For he knew that John was a good man and he did not want to kill him. But because he had prom-

ised, and because the guests at the feast had heard him promise, he was afraid to change his mind.

So he sent his servants to kill John the Baptist. And they brought his head on a platter and gave it to Salome. As soon as she saw it, she was glad, for she was not afraid any more that the man of God would make Herod send her and her mother away. She took the head to her mother and both were happy.

But the wicked princess Salome did not have the chance to become great, as she thought she would when John the Baptist was dead. For when the king saw what she had done, and how she had fooled him and charmed him into killing a good man, he said to his soldiers: "Fall on her." So they lifted their heavy shields and fell on her, and the shields crushed her and she died. And that was the end of the wicked princess Salome.

QUESTIONS

Who was Salome?

What did Salome want more than anything else?

What great man of God was preaching wonderful sermons?

What did John say about King Herod?

What did he do when Herod sent for him?

What did Salome do for King Herod?

What did Herod promise her?

What did she ask for?

Why did she want to kill John the Baptist?

What happened to Salome?

THE FORTY-FOURTH STORY

THE BOY WITH THE BASKET



BOYS loved Jesus and were glad to do what he wanted them to do. This is the story of a boy who did a fine thing for Jesus.

Years and years ago, in the days when Jesus was on earth, there was a little boy who lived by the shore of a beautiful lake. The name of the lake was the Sea of Galilee. But nobody

knows what the name of the little boy was.

There is just one thing that people know about that little boy. One day he had a chance to help Jesus. That was a wonderful thing to have, was it not? But everyone gets that chance some time, and not everyone is as glad as this boy was. Some people will not even take the chance when they get it.

This boy lived by the Sea of Galilee. When he was very small he used to go out with his father in the fishing boat. For nearly all the people that lived around that lake were fishermen. And when the boy was older, sometimes he helped catch the fish.

This boy used to like to listen to the things that the older people talked about. You can learn a great deal if you listen when older people are talking, in-

stead of always wanting to talk yourself. These older people talked about a great king in Rome, who had fought with the land of Israel and conquered it, and who made the Children of Israel pay him money.

"Some day," said the people, "there will be a great man of God among our people. He will come from God, and he will be strong, and brave, and a great king. Then he will help us fight this king at Rome, and we shall be a free people again." When the little boy heard this he hoped that the great man of God would not come till he was a man, because he wanted to fight for him.

But one day the boy heard a new thing. He heard his father saying to some of the fishermen: "Do you know about this man called Jesus? They say He is a great man of God. They say He has been curing the sick people by just touching them, and He has been making the blind men see. He must be a wonderful man."

And the other fishermen said: "Some of our best friends have gone after Him, and become followers of His. There are Simon and Andrew and Philip, all from our town. They say He has come from God to help us."

Then the boy began to wonder who this great man was, and whether He was the man of God that was going to help the Children of Israel fight the king and be free people. He used to go over to Simon's and Andrew's house, for they were fishermen that lived close by, and ask from Simon and Andrew about the great man of God that they were following.

At last one day he heard some news that made him very much excited. He heard Simon's mother say: "Do you know that Simon is going to be in town today? The great man of God is coming this way, to go out in the desert and rest awhile. He has been curing so many people that He is tired and He wants to stop and rest. He is going through the town this very day."

The boy was very glad, for he thought: "At last I shall have a chance to see this great man of God, who is doing such wonderful things. Perhaps I shall see Him do something. I will go after Him and watch."

So when Jesus came through the town, the boy was watching to see Him. But do you suppose any other people in the town were watching, too? Of course they were; all the town was there to see. They came out of their houses and they filled all the streets, and they brought all the sick people in the town to Jesus to be cured.

Whenever the boy thought he saw a good chance to get near Jesus, his father said: "My boy, you must let the sick people go first, for they need Him more." And there were so many people that the boy began to be afraid that he would not get any chance at all.

After a while, when the sick people were nearly all cured, and the boy thought his time had come, he heard Simon and Andrew calling out: "Let us pass, O people, and do not disturb the Master. For He must go out in the desert to rest." Then the boy began to be still more afraid that he would not have any chance to see the wonderful man of God.

But he said to himself: "This is what I will do. I

will go home and get some lunch, and then I will go after the people and stay with them till I see Him." So the boy went home and put up some lunch. He took five crackers and two little fishes to eat when he got hungry. And then he went after the wonderful man of God.

But all the other people of the town were doing just the same thing. Only they did not even stop to get their lunch. They just walked right along, taking their sick people with them.

When Jesus came to the desert place where He wanted to rest, there were so many people waiting there for Him, that He knew He could not rest all that day. They wanted Him to tell them about God and to cure their sick people. So Jesus began to talk to them about God and about what God wanted them to do. And they brought sick people to Him and He healed them.

After a while it began to grow late. Then the people remembered that they had not had any lunch and they began to grow very hungry. The boy said to himself: "How glad I am that I brought some lunch along, for now I have something to eat, and it is a long way home without food."

When Jesus saw that it was growing late, and that the people were hungry, He spoke to His disciples. Do you know what disciples are? They are the men who follow after a great man of God. He is their Master and their teacher, and they are called his disciples. So Jesus said to His disciples: "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?"

Then the disciples looked around and saw that there

was no town near, and all the people were far away from home. So they said to Jesus: "The place is desert, and the day is now far spent: send them away that they may go into the country and villages round



THE DISCIPLES AND THE BOY WITH THE BASKET

about and buy themselves somewhat to eat. Send them away, that they may lodge, and get food, for we are here in a desert place."

But Jesus knew that the people were very tired and

hungry. He did not like to send them away. So He said to His disciples: "They have no need to go away. Give ye them to eat."

Now how would you feel, if you were out in a desert with no food around, and there were thousands and thousands of people, and someone should say to you: "Give them all enough to eat"? You would feel surprised. Well, the disciples were surprised, too. They said to Jesus: "How shall we give them anything to eat? Forty dollars' worth of bread is not enough, to give every one a little."

Jesus said to them: "How many loaves have you? Go and see." So the disciples hurried around through the crowd to see how much there was to eat. Almost the first person they found was the boy who had brought his lunch. He was pushing up just as near the front as he could. As soon as he saw Andrew looking around, he called to him and said: "O Andrew, is there anything the Master wants that I could do?" You see he knew Andrew, for they lived in the same town, and he saw that Andrew wanted something, so he thought that perhaps here was his chance.

But Andrew said: "There is nothing you can do. We are looking for something to eat."

The boy thought that perhaps the great man of God was hungry and he said: "I have my lunch here. You can have that." But Andrew said: "We are looking for enough for all the people." So the little boy stepped back, for he knew he had not enough food for that.

So the disciples came back to Jesus and they had not found anything. Nobody but the little boy had

brought lunch. Then Andrew spoke up and said: "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?"

But as soon as Jesus heard about the five little loaves and the two fishes, he said: "Bring them hither to me. Make the people sit down."

So all the disciples went to make the people sit down, but Andrew brought the little boy to Jesus. Do you not suppose the boy was very proud when he knew that the great and wonderful man of God wanted his lunch? He walked up quickly with Andrew and gave all the food he had brought to Jesus.

When the boy saw that Jesus was passing the bread and the fishes to the disciples, he thought: "There won't be any left for Him; no one will have more than a little bite." But when he saw the disciples begin to pass it around to all the people, he was so surprised that he did not know what to do.

But then something happened that surprised him still more. The disciples passed and passed the food, and the more they passed, the more there was. They went to the first hundred men and to the next hundred men, and they all took all they wanted. And after a while they went to the whole five thousand men. All of them ate the bread and fish, and still there was plenty. And when everyone had had as much as he wanted to eat, Jesus said to His disciples: "Gather up now the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with the broken pieces from the five barley loaves which remained over unto them that had eaten.

So all the people went home. And the little boy went home too, wondering about what he had seen. And as he went home he was very happy. For he had seen the man of God, and he had seen Him do a wonderful thing. And what was still better, he had helped do it.

QUESTIONS

Where did the boy live who helped Jesus?

What did he hear one day?

Why did he want to see Jesus?

Why did he have a hard time to reach Jesus?

Where did Jesus go when He left the town?

What did the boy do when he saw Jesus going away?

What happened when the people had been listening to Jesus all day?

Did Jesus want to let them go away hungry?

What did Jesus tell His disciples to do?

What did the little boy do?

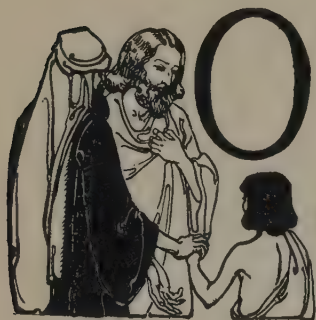
What happened when Jesus began to pass the bread and fish around?

Why was the little boy happy when he went home?



THE FORTY-FIFTH STORY

THE BOYS WHO WERE BROUGHT TO JESUS



ONCE upon a time, in the days when Jesus lived, there was a boy who was crazy. He lived with his father and mother by the side of a great mountain, not far from the Sea of Galilee. He had a special kind of craziness. Most of the time he would be all right, and no one would know that anything was the matter with him. He was just like any other boy.

But once in a while he would act so strangely that everyone said: "Some wicked spirit has gone into that boy. He is not like an ordinary boy at all." He would throw himself down on the ground, and grind his teeth, and white foam would come out of his mouth. He could not speak and he could not hear anything that people said to him.

In those days people thought that all the strange kinds of craziness that they did not understand, were made by devils coming into little boys and girls and making them do things. It looks that way sometimes, does it not, when boys do things that they would never think of doing if they had any sense?

When a boy gets so angry that he throws things, or screams or rolls on the ground, it looks just as if it was not really the boy himself at all, but a wicked devil instead.

This boy was worse than that. He was not just angry; for angry people can help what they do. This boy could not help it. Sometimes this strange craziness, that was in him, would throw him into fire or into deep water. Many times he was nearly killed by it.

The boy's father and mother were very sad when they saw what a terrible spirit was in their little boy. They tried everything they could. They went to all the doctors they knew, but none of the doctors could do anything. They could not even tell what was the matter with the boy. They only said: "There is a wicked devil that is doing these things."

But after a while the father heard of someone. Who was it who was going all through the land of Israel doing wonderful things? It was Jesus, of course. The father and mother heard of Jesus, and the father said: "How I should like to take my son to Him! Perhaps He could do something."

The boy's mother answered: "We have tried everything, and no one could help us. Do not let us try any more, for we shall only be disappointed."

Then the father said: "If Jesus comes to our own town, so that we do not have to go far away to look for Him, then shall we not take our boy to Him?" And the mother said that perhaps that would be best, if Jesus ever came near enough.

So the days and the weeks went by, and after a

while, just a little time after the boy helped Jesus feed the five thousand people, Jesus came to this man's town. Jesus had gone away from the crowds of people who were always following Him. He wanted to be alone with His twelve disciples, to talk to them and teach them about God.

After Jesus had talked to His twelve disciples for a while, He wanted to rest still more. So He went away on the top of a mountain, and took only three of the disciples along. He took Simon Peter and James and John up on the mountain with Him. But all the rest of the disciples were left down below in the valley.

The father of the crazy boy brought his little son to the disciples and said to them: "You are the disciples of the great man of God. You must know how He cures people of all their sickness. Take away the wicked devil that is hurting my poor little boy and making him crazy."

Then the disciples spoke out very loud and said: "O wicked devil, come out of that boy. Let him be well again, and not crazy any more." But the boy threw himself down on the ground and white foam came out of his mouth.

The father wept and said: "No one is able to help me. No one can make the wicked spirit come out of my boy."

So the disciples shook the boy very hard and said: "O wicked spirit, leave the boy. We command you to leave him." But the boy just ground his teeth together and threw himself around on the ground. So the disciples said: "We cannot do it. We have seen

Jesus do it many times, and we thought we would know how. But we cannot do it."

The man cried: "Is no one able to help my son?" And the disciples answered: "Wait till Jesus Himself comes down from the mountain." So the man waited. A great crowd gathered around them to ask what was the matter. Some of the chief men of the town came out to see the man and his boy, for they knew how crazy the boy had always been, and they wondered whether Jesus could do anything.

So, after a while, when Jesus came down from the mountain, He saw a great crowd of people running toward Him. I suppose Jesus must have been very tired of seeing so many people, for they were always coming to Him to get help. But He came over to the crowd to see what they wanted. His face was all shining and happy, for he had been talking to God on the mountain. All the people stood back and wondered at Him.

Then a man came up to Jesus and knelt down before Him. You know who the man was, do you not? The boy's father. And the man said: "Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: and he foameth and grindeth his teeth and pineth away. And I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out; and they were not able."

Jesus said to the man and to the people standing near: "O people who have no belief, how long shall I be with you? Bring the boy to me." So they brought the boy to Jesus. And while the boy was coming, the wicked spirit went into him, and he fell

on the ground, and white foam came out of his mouth.

Jesus asked: "How long has he been this way?" And the father answered: "From the time when he was a little boy. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the water, to destroy him; but if thou canst do anything, have pity on us and help us."

Jesus answered: "All things are possible if you have faith." And the man cried out: "I believe; help me."

So Jesus spoke to the wicked spirit and said: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee. Come out of him and enter him no more." Then the wicked spirit came out and the boy fell over on the ground as if he were dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up and brought him to his father.

And all the people who saw it were astonished at the greatness of God, and at the greatness of Jesus, the wonderful man of God, who had cured the crazy boy.

* * * * *

Many, many years ago there lived in the city of Nain a woman who had one little boy. She lived very happily with her husband and her son, and thought of the time that was coming when the boy would be a great man. "How proud his father will be," she said.

But the years and years went by, and her husband fell sick and died. Then the woman wept bitter tears, and she said: "I wish that I too were dead. Why should I live when my husband is no longer living?"

The neighbors came to her and comforted her and said: "You still have your little boy to live for. You

must be strong and take care of him, now that your husband is dead."

But one day, when they arose in the morning, the boy said to his mother: "Mother, I feel sick." Then her heart stood still for a moment, for she remembered the time when his father had been sick before he died. But she said: "It is nothing, my son. You will be all right tomorrow."

The next day the boy was worse, and the day after that he was very sick indeed. Then his mother grew frightened. She sent to the neighbors to ask them what to do, but none of the neighbors could tell her. She sent to all the doctors in the town, and they all came.

The poor widow did not have very much money to pay the doctors, but she did not care how much she spent. She did not care if it took all the money she had, if only her son could be made well again. But one by one the doctors came, until she had paid out all her money, and not one of all the doctors could help her.

Now this was the time when the great man of God was living, who cured so many people, and who taught everyone about God. Do you remember who it was? Jesus. But the poor widow had spent so much time thinking about her work and about her son, that she had not even heard of Jesus, and the wonderful cures he had made.

So she never thought of sending for Jesus to come and cure her boy. Or perhaps she only thought of Him after her money was gone, and she did not know that Jesus would help her for nothing. So she sat

by her boy's bed. And one morning, when it was very early, and the sun was not yet up, but the sky was cold and gray, what happened? The boy died.

His mother wept bitter tears, and again she wished that she was dead. For now she thought that really she had nothing left to live for. Her husband was dead, and her boy was dead, and there was no one left in all the world that belonged to her.

But she could not die just because she wanted to, so she rose and put the grave-clothes on her boy, and laid him on a bier and got ready for the funeral. In those days they did not have the kind of funerals we have now. They laid the boy on a long piece of board that was called a bier. And they all went in procession through the streets carrying the dead boy, till they came to the place where he was to be buried.

That was the way they always did at funerals. But they did not do that way at this funeral. For just when they were going out of the city gates, carrying the dead boy, what do you suppose happened? They met Jesus. He was going through the city of Nain with His disciples, and He came there just in time.

Jesus said to the woman: "Weep not." And she was very much surprised. All the other people had told her not to weep, but they did not make any difference. But as soon as Jesus spoke, she stopped crying, and looked up. And she knew that He was the great man of God come to help her.

Then Jesus drew near to the bier, and the men who were carrying it stood still. They wondered what was going to happen. They knew that Jesus could do very wonderful things. But no one they had ever

seen had done anything so wonderful as this. No one could make a dead boy alive again. They wondered if Jesus could.

So Jesus spoke to the widow's son. He said: "Young man, I say unto thee, arise."

Everyone stood still, and they all held their breath to see what would happen. And what do you suppose did happen? The widow's son sat up on the bier where he was, and began to speak. He said: "How did I come here, and who are all these people?"

Then Jesus gave the boy to his mother. And when the people saw what had happened, they were afraid. For they had never seen anything so wonderful before. Then they thanked God and said: "A great man of God has arisen among us, and God himself is visiting us."

QUESTIONS

Who were two of the boys that Jesus cured?

What was the matter with them?

What did the crazy boy do when he was crazy?

What did everyone think made him crazy?

Who tried to cure the crazy boy and could not do it?

What did Jesus do to the boy?

How did Jesus happen to see the boy who was dead?

What did Jesus do when he saw the poor mother crying?

What did all the people think when Jesus brought the boy to life again?

THE FORTY-SIXTH STORY

THE YOUNGER SON



PERHAPS you would like to hear a story that Jesus told about a boy who ran away from home. Did you ever know any boy who wanted to run away from home? Some boys think it would be very fine. There would not be any work to do, and no father and mother to trouble them, and no older brothers to tease them. They think they could do just as they wanted to do. Well, this boy really did run away, and you will see what happened.

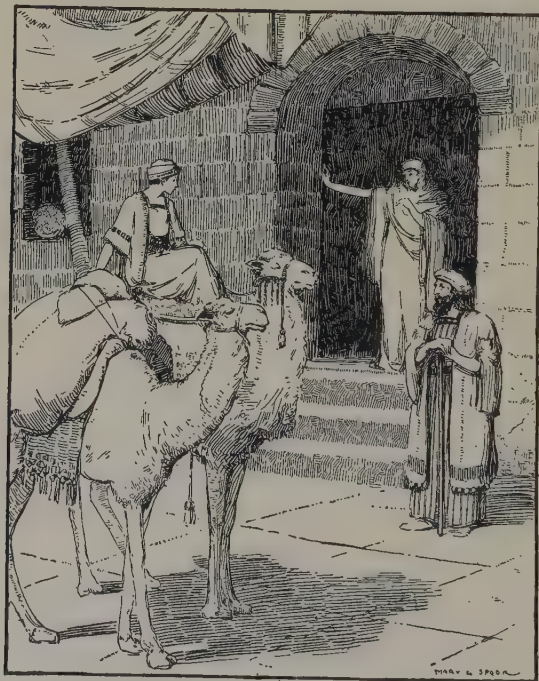
His father was a rich man, who had plenty of sheep and cows. There were two boys in the family. The older brother never wanted to run away. He liked staying at home and working on the farm. He said to himself: "I have plenty to eat and plenty to wear and what can anyone ask more? My father is a rich man and some day I shall have land and sheep and cows of my own."

But one day the younger boy came to his father and said: "Father."

The father answered: "What is it, my son?" And the boy said: "I am tired of staying at home. I want to go away."

Then his father said to him: "My son, you have plenty to eat and to wear, and what more do you desire? Some day you will have sheep and cows and land of your own, and you will be a rich man."

But the boy replied: "I am tired of staying at home. Give me my share of the money that is going to be-



THE PRODIGAL SON LEAVING HOME

long to me some day, and I will go to a far country and see the world. Perhaps I shall make my fortune and be even richer than you are."

Then the father said: "O my son, there are wicked men who live in the far country. And you are very

young. It is better to stay at home where you have plenty to eat and to wear. And if there is anything else you wish, tell me and I will give it to you."

The boy said: "Oh, yes, there is plenty of food at home, but still I want to go into a far country. For I want to have a good time. I want to see the world. Give me my share of your money and let me start out at once."

Do you think the younger son had any right to ask for his share of his father's money? Of course not. He did not have any share at all, unless he stayed at home and worked for it. It all belonged to his father. But he asked for it just as if it belonged to him.

So the father divided the money and kept some for himself, and some for the older brother, and gave the rest to the younger son. And not many days after, the younger son got all his things together, all of his money and all of his clothes, and went away to a far country.

He went north and north through the desert country till he came to great cities. And he went east and east through the desert country till he came to a great river. He went south and south through the desert country till he came to a sea. But last of all he came to a very far country, so far that no one had ever heard of the land of his home.

Then the younger son said to himself: "I will stop here and have a good time. And I will make my fortune."

Sometimes when a boy goes away from home to seek his fortune, he works very hard and makes a great deal of money. Then he works very hard again and takes

good care of the money he has made, and after a while he comes home a rich man.

Do you think this boy was that kind of boy? Why not? Because he did not go away from home to work, but to have a good time. And because he took his father's money just as if it belonged to him. Boys like that never do very much in life.

So instead of working hard and earning money, the younger son began to spend his money for all kinds of things. He bought everything that he wanted, for he said: "I am going to have a good time."

There were other young men in that far country who liked to have a good time. But they had spent their money till they did not have very much left. So as soon as they saw the younger son, and knew that he was spending his money fast, what do you suppose they did? Do you think they went to him and said: "If you spend your money so fast you will not have any left, for we have spent ours and we are poor?" Do you think they said that?

Of course not. They said to each other: "Here is a rich young man who likes to spend money. It is a good chance for us. We will have a good time with him and be friends with him, and then he will invite us to dinners and parties and will spend his money for us. For we have spent nearly all our own already."

So they made friends with the younger son. They showed him all the land, and they went on long trips with him, and they helped him spend his money. And when the money went faster and faster, the young men laughed and said: "If you need any more, come



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IN THE FAR COUNTRY.

and ask us for it." So the younger son thought: "What good friends I have. They would do anything for me." And he never knew that they only wanted his money.

One day one of the young men said: "Let us have some wine to drink." Then the younger son did not know what to do. For he had never had wine at home and he knew it was not good for him. So he said: "Do you think it would be good for us?"

But the other young men laughed and said: "You are not a baby any longer. You are grown-up and can do as you please. Wine is very good, and only babies are afraid of it." So the younger son drank the wine and bought it for all of his friends.

After that he used to drink wine often and to buy it for his friends. And when he was drunk he spent still more money. For when a man is drunk he does not care for right or wrong, or for anything but having a good time. And that was why the men made the younger son drink wine. They knew he would spend more money for them if he did.

But all the while, the younger son said to himself: "What a fine time I am having! And what good friends I have! They would do anything for me. This is much better than staying at home and working." So he never knew how poor he was getting.

One night the younger son went out with his friends and drank a great deal of wine. The next morning when he woke he felt in his pockets, and what do you suppose he found? All of his money was gone; every single piece of it. He did not even have enough to buy breakfast.

He was very much surprised, but he said to himself: "What difference does it make? I have such good friends. They will not let me be hungry."

So he went to see one of his friends and said: "I have come to take breakfast with you, for my money is all gone. But I know you are my friend, and you have always told me to come to you when I needed anything."

But his friend began to make excuses. "I cannot give you any breakfast this morning," he said. "I have only enough for myself. Come some other time." But the next time when he came his friend was not there.

Then the younger son went to all of his friends one after the other and not one of them would do anything for him. They did not care for a boy who had lost his money. The younger son was left all alone in a strange land.

Then there came a great famine in the land. Do you remember what a famine is? It is when the corn and wheat do not grow and there is not enough to eat. The younger son got very hungry. He wanted to work for some food, but he did not know how to work. No one wants a boy who wastes all his money. The younger son had never learned to work. So he could not get any good work to do.

After a while a man came to him and said: "I need some one to feed my pigs. Do you want a chance to do the work?"

Feeding pigs is very dirty work and the younger son hated it. He thought: "I would rather do anything else than feed those pigs." But no one wanted

him for anything else. So he went into the field to feed the pigs.

So he worked very hard in the field, and when he could hardly stand, he sat down on the ground and thought what a fool he was. Then he remembered his home and his father, and said: "Even the servants at home have enough to eat, and more than enough, while I am dying of hunger."

The more he thought, the more he wanted his home. At last he said: "I will arise and go to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have done wrong, I ran away and I spent all your money. I can not ask you to treat me like a son again, but let me be one of your hired servants. For even the servants at home get enough to eat.' " So he rose and went home to his father.

But what do you suppose his father was doing all this time? He was wishing for his boy. Every morning when he went out to the field he thought: "I wonder where my boy is this morning and what he is doing." And every evening when he came home he thought: "I wonder when my boy will be coming home again."

So when the boy came home, his father saw him a long way off, and ran to him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and said: "O, my son, my son!"

Then the boy said: "Father, I have done wrong. I am not worth being your son, make me one of your servants."

But the father called to his servants: "Bring the best clothes in the house for my boy, and bring a ring for his hand and shoes for his feet. And take

the fattest calf we have, the one we have saved for a great feast, and kill it, and we will make a dinner. For my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

So they gave a great dinner with music and singing and feasting. The father never said to his son: "What did you do with all the money you took into a foreign country?" He did not care for the money; he only cared about his boy.

So the younger son stayed at home all the rest of his days. He worked very hard and took good care of his father's farm and never wanted to go away again. For he knew that after all no one else really cared for him as much as his father did.

QUESTIONS

Why did the younger son go away from home?

What did he ask his father for?

Where did he go?

Did he want to work hard and get rich?

What did the young men in the far country do?

What happened when the younger son had spent all his money?

What kind of work did he get?

What did he think about himself?

What did he do?

Was his father waiting for him when he came home?

What did his father do for him?

What does that show about fathers?

THE FORTY-SEVENTH STORY

TWO GIRLS THAT JESUS CURED



HUNDREDS and hundreds of years ago, in the time when Jesus lived, there was a rich man whose name was Jairus. He lived in a town by the shores of a lake, and he was one of the great men in the town. Everyone knew of Jairus and everyone knew what a good man he was.

Jairus was not a priest, but he was almost as good as a priest. He had to decide every Sabbath day who should read from the word of God, and he had to choose the man to preach to the people. There was no one in all the church who was greater than Jairus.

When Jairus went out on the street he used to wear a little box tied to his forehead. What do you suppose was in the box? There were verses from the word of God, all written down and tightly rolled together. Jairus wore this box as a sign that he meant to keep God's word on his mind all the time. There was no one in all the town who was better than Jairus.

But Jairus was very sad. Even if he was great and good, and even if everybody knew him and loved him, there was one thing that made him sad. His little daughter was very sick. No one knew what was

the matter with her and no one could cure her. At last the doctors said: "Unless something is done to help her very soon, she will die." But no one could tell what to do.

Then Jairus heard of Jesus, the man of God who was doing such wonderful things. Jairus lived on the very lake where Jesus lived, but He was in a different town. So Jairus said to himself: "I know what I will do. I will go and seek for Jesus and ask Him to come and cure my little girl."

He rose up from beside the bed where the little girl lay and went quickly through the streets of the town. He went down to the edge of the lake to take a boat. But just as he reached the edge of the water, he saw a great crowd of people. They were all gathered around one man, and they were bringing out their sick people for Him to touch. Then Jairus knew that Jesus Himself had just come across the lake, and he was very glad, for he said: "Surely God is going to help me, for He has sent Jesus here, even before I went after Him."

Jairus came near to Jesus and knelt down before Him. All the people were surprised when they saw so great a man kneeling on the ground. But Jairus did not care what they thought. He only cared about his little girl.

So he said to Jesus: "My little daughter is at the point of death. I pray thee that thou come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be made whole and live."

Jesus was filled with pity for poor Jairus, and He said: "I will go with thee to thy house." So Jairus

led the way to his house. And all the crowds of people followed after them, so that they could not go very fast. For everyone wanted to see what Jesus was going to do.

But while they were going, Jairus lifted up his eyes and saw his servants coming. Then he was filled with fear, for he knew they had come to bring him news, and he was afraid it was bad news. And the servants came near and said: "Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Teacher any further?"

Then Jairus grew sad at heart, and he said: "It is too late; there is no more hope." For you see Jairus did not know about the widow's son that Jesus had cured, and he thought: "No one can bring the dead to life."

But Jesus answered him: "Fear not, only believe." Then Jairus took heart again and they went on together.

So they came to the place where Jairus lived. As soon as they were nearly there, they began to hear sounds of sad music and weeping coming out of the door. For in those days when anyone was dead, they used to have people come to the house to play very sad music and to cry aloud and make a great deal of noise.

When Jesus heard all the people crying and making sad music, He said to them: "Go out of the house, and leave me alone. Why make ye a noise and weep? The child is not dead, but sleepeth." Then they all laughed at Him, for they were quite sure that she was dead.

But Jesus put them all out of the house. He did

not want to have people around Him who were weeping and making a great noise. He took only the father and mother of the girl, and three of His disciples, Peter and James and John.

Then He went into the room where the girl was lying. She was stretched out white and still on her bed. Her mother and father could hardly keep the tears from their eyes as they looked at her, but they believed in Jesus. They knew that He was going to do something wonderful, and they watched Him.

Jesus went up to the little girl as she lay there, and took her by the hand. And He said to her: "Talitha Cumi," which means, "Maiden, I say unto thee, arise."

What do you suppose happened? The maiden arose and got out of bed. She did not even sit still on the edge of the bed, but she began to walk about the room.

Jairus was very much surprised at what Jesus had done, and he thanked God, who had sent Jesus to help him. And the mother fell at Jesus' feet and cried: "O Master, you have brought my little daughter back from the grave to me."

But Jesus said: "Give the maiden food." For He knew that she was hungry after such a hard sickness. So they went and brought food for the maiden. And they all were very glad and lived very happily ever afterwards, thanking God for the great thing that had been done for them.

* * *

Now let us hear the story of the Stranger Girl.

Almost all the time that Jesus was on earth, He lived and went around in just one country, the land



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RAISING THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

where the Children of Israel lived. But this is a story about one time when He went for a little while to another country, and cured a little girl.

When Jesus was doing so many good and wonderful things, and telling the people how to love God, and how to be kind to each other, you would think that every one would love Jesus, would you not? It would be very strange, would it not, if people should want to kill him? But that was just what happened.

A great many people were angry with Jesus just because He was so good. You see, Jesus could not help seeing how bad some of the things were that people were doing, and He preached about it, and told them that they should not do such wicked things. This made them angry and they tried to kill Jesus.

So Jesus went northward till He came to the land of Tyre and Sidon, a stranger land where the Children of Israel could not come after Him to kill Him. He stayed there for many days.

There lived in that land a woman, who had a little daughter. The woman was not one of Jesus' own people; Jesus' own people were the Children of Israel, the people that we call the Jews. But this woman had heard of the great man of God among the Jews, and she often thought: "How I wish I could see Him some day, and that He could help me!"

The woman's daughter was very sick. She had been sick for many years and no one could do anything for her. All of the wise men and wise women, and all of the doctors tried, but there was nothing they could do.

At last they said: "She must have a wicked spirit,

or a devil, that is hurting her." You remember they used to think all the sicknesses they could not cure were made by wicked devils.

When the woman heard this, she was very sad. She



THE MOTHER PRAYING FOR COUNSEL.

prayed to God about what she should do. For she loved God and used to pray to Him, even if she was not one of the Children of Israel.

After a while the news came of the wonderful man

of God who lived far to the south, and of the people He had cured. The woman wanted very much to take her daughter with her and go down to see Jesus. But it was a long way off, and she did not know how to travel so far with a sick girl.

One day a neighbor came in and said to her: "What do you think has happened? The wonderful man of God has left His own land, because the people there want to kill Him, and He is coming here."

How do you think the woman felt when she heard that? She was very happy, of course. She said to her neighbor: "When he comes here, I will ask Him to cure my little girl and send away the devil that is hurting her."

But the neighbor laughed and said: "Do you think the man of God would do anything for us? We are strangers in a strange land, and the man of God is a Jew. The Jews will never do anything for strangers."

This made the woman sad for a long time. She thought long about it, and she prayed to God. At last she said: "Even if we are strangers, He is a man of God, and God has sent Him. God loves the strangers too, and will help us."

So when Jesus came to the northern land, where the people were all strangers and not His own people, the first person he met was this woman. Jesus was very much surprised. He thought that now, when He had come away from His own country, no one would know anything about Him or come to Him to be helped.

But the woman said: "Have mercy upon me, O

Master, for my daughter is hurt by a devil. And I know that thou hast power to do all things. Come and cure my daughter, for thou art a man of God."

The disciples said to Jesus: "Send her away, for she troubles us. She is only a stranger woman, and what do we care about her and her daughter." The disciples did not think that Jesus would care about any people except the Jews.

But Jesus wanted to know what the woman thought, so He said to her: "God sent me to help the Children of Israel, and to teach them to love God." But the woman knelt at His feet and prayed: "Lord, help me."

Jesus said: "You know that the Jews call themselves the children of God, and they think all other people are dogs? Do you think I should take the bread that was meant for the children, and give it to the dogs?"

But the woman answered him: "O Lord, even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." And by this she meant that Jesus could do just a little thing for her, even if she was a stranger woman.

Then Jesus said: "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done even as thou wilt. Go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

So the woman went home and found her daughter lying on the bed resting, and the bad spirit of sickness was gone away and never came back again. Then the woman was very happy and she sent and called all her neighbors and said: "See what the man of God has done for me, even if I am only a stranger woman,"

QUESTIONS

Who were the two girls that Jesus cured?

What was the matter with Jairus' daughter?

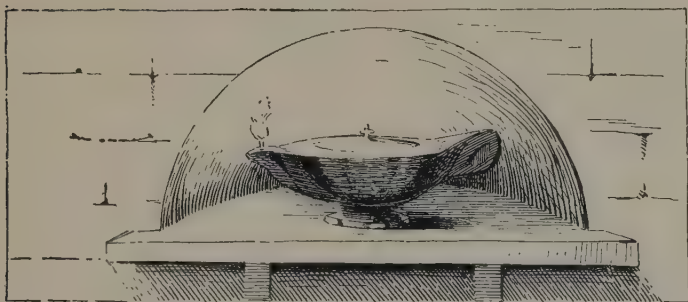
What was the matter with the daughter of the stranger woman?

Do you think a rich Jew like Jairus would ever have helped the stranger woman's little girl? Why not?

Why did Jesus help both of them?

Does God love all kinds of people?

What did Jesus do when He cured the daughter of Jairus? Did He do the same thing when He cured the stranger girl?



THE FORTY-EIGHTH STORY

TWO STORIES THAT JESUS TOLD



VERY probably you remember this story which Jesus told about ten girls who were invited to a wedding, and about how some of them were wise and some were foolish.

Jesus said that He was telling these stories about the kingdom of God. Do you know what the kingdom of God is? It is any place where God is king. It is in your heart, if God is king there, and if you do whatever God tells you to do. It is in heaven too, because there everybody does whatever God wishes. And it is all over the earth, wherever there is anyone who loves God and makes God his king.

The kingdom of God, said Jesus, is like ten girls who were invited to a wedding feast. And when evening came they took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

This is the way they have weddings in the land where Jesus lived. All of the people who are invited come together at the bride's house. And they have a great feast there. Then the girls who are friends of the bride make a grand procession, and go to the bridegroom's house to bring him to the bride.

They have little flat lamps with a hole in the top where the oil goes in, and a hole in the side where the wick comes out, and the lamps will only burn for a little time. They have to keep putting new oil into the lamps. So when people go for a long distance,



THE TEN GIRLS WITH THEIR LAMPS

they must carry some oil with them, for if they do not, the lamps will go out, and they will be left in the dark.

So these ten girls went out to meet the bridegroom and take him to the feast at the house of the bride. Five of the girls were wise. They remembered to take oil with them. The other five were not wise. They were in a hurry when they started from home, so they just took the little flat lamps and the oil that was already in them.

Then the wise maidens said to the foolish ones: "Why do you not bring plenty of oil?" But the foolish ones answered: "It will be only a short time before the bridegroom comes, and we have plenty of oil to last till then. Why should we bother to carry any more?"

But the wise maidens said: "You never know when the bridegroom will come. We want to be sure that we are ready for everything." So they took their lamps and some more oil besides.

At last the maidens came to the place where they were to meet the bridegroom. But the bridegroom was not there. Then they said: "Surely he will be coming soon. It is past the time for the wedding." So they waited there for him. Every once in a while they thought they heard him coming. Then they arose and waved their lamps and got ready to sing a song to welcome him.

But each time it was not the bridegroom coming, but someone else going by. So, after a while, the maidens grew tired waiting, and they said: "We will lie down and sleep and let some one call us when the bridegroom comes. For we do not want to be so tired and sleepy at the wedding."

So all the maidens went to sleep. They put their

lamps down on the ground beside them, so that they could take them up as soon as the bridegroom came. But the hours went by and one by one the little lamps burned lower and lower, until they all went out. And it was dark everywhere, except for just a little starlight.

The hours passed until it was midnight. Then all of a sudden there arose a great shout, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye forth to meet him."

The maidens arose. They rubbed their eyes, and stretched themselves, for it made them very sleepy to wake up just at midnight. Then they began to look for their lamps.

"Why, the lights are out," said one of the maidens. "It must be very late."

"We shall have to fill the lamps again," said the five wise maidens. So they took their little pots and began to pour oil into the lamps. There was just enough to fill their lamps, but there was not any left over.

The five foolish maidens said: "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps have gone out. We must have lights if we are going to meet the bridegroom."

But the wise maidens said: "Why did you not bring some oil in a little pot? You know that lamps do not last very long. And now we would be glad to give you some, but we have only enough for ourselves, and our own lamps would go out if we tried to divide."

The five foolish maidens wondered what they could do. They could not go in the grand procession without any lights, and they did not have any oil. At last

one of them said: "I know what we can do. We will go to the shop where they sell oil. We will wake the shopkeeper and buy enough oil from him to fill our lamps."

So the five maidens set out to buy some oil. They went to a shop, but the place was dark. They rapped and rapped and made a great noise, until at last a man put his head out of the window and said: "What do you want?"

The maidens answered: "We are going to a wedding feast, and we need some oil, for our lamps are gone out."

"You will have to wait till I get dressed and come down," said the man. "This is no time of night to be getting people out of their beds for a wedding feast. You should have bought it before."

So the maidens waited. At last they got all the oil they needed. They filled their lamps and lighted them, and started out for the feast. But what do you think they found?

While they were gone, the bridegroom had come. The maidens who were ready went in with him to the feast. And the door was shut to keep out all the people who were not invited, the people who were prowling around in the night.

But the five maidens said: "We will go to the door and they will let us in. We will explain about our lamps." So they came to the door. But the doorkeeper would not open to them. "The wedding feast is begun," he said, "and the guests are all here at the feast. We cannot open the door so late to the people prowling around in the night."

“But we were invited to the wedding feast,” the maidens said.

“Then why did you not come in with the bridegroom?” asked the door-keeper. “Only those who come in with the bridegroom can be at the feast. I do not know you.”

The five foolish maidens tried to explain what had happened, and how their lamps had gone out. But the door-keeper only said: “You should have been here before. We cannot open now.”

So the five foolish maidens had to go home alone in the dark, because they had forgotten to bring enough oil. They only thought about having enough to last for a little while.

What do you suppose Jesus meant when He said the kingdom of God was like these maidens? He meant that some people are wise. They are getting themselves ready for God. They love God and do what God wishes, and they will be all ready whenever God comes. They are like the wise maidens.

But some people are very foolish. They have just enough love in their hearts to last a little while. But God does not always come just when people expect Him. And the foolish maidens who have only a little love in their hearts for God and for other people, will find that it does not last long enough to do any good. So they can not go into the kingdom of God with all the people who love God.

* * * * *

Here is another story that Jesus told about the kingdom of God. Once upon a time, said Jesus, there were two boys. Their father kept a vineyard

where grapes grew. The time had come to pick the grapes, for they were all ripe.

The father went to one of his boys and said: "My son, go and work today in my vineyard. The grapes are ripe and I need your help."

But the boy answered his father: "There are many things I want to do today for myself. I have no time to work in your vineyard."

So the father went to his other son and said: "O son, go and work today in my vineyard. The grapes are ripe and they will spoil if they are not picked. Your brother will not work today, for he says he wishes to do other things, but surely you love me well enough to help me."

The second boy answered: "Yes, father, I will go to work in your vineyard." And the father said to himself: "At least I have one boy who will help me."

But what do you suppose happened? As soon as the father was out of sight, the second boy, the boy who had promised to help, went off to play. He looked this way, and he looked that way, and he thought: "My father will never know." So he did not go to work in the vineyard all the whole day long.

The first boy said to himself: "How sad my father looked when he saw that I did not love him well enough to help him! It is very wrong for me to hurt my father so. I will go to the vineyard and work for him without telling him anything about it, and then he will be surprised, for he will know that I really love him." So the first boy went out and worked all day long for his father.

When Jesus had finished the story, he said to the people: "Which of these two boys loved his father best?" And they all said: "The first one, because he really helped his father."

Jesus said: "Some of the people who never pretend to be good are better than you. For you say you love God, but you never do anything for Him. It would be better for you not to say so much and to do more, like the boy who said he would not go, but afterwards was sorry and went."

QUESTIONS

What story did Jesus tell about ten girls?

Were all of the ten girls alike? What was the difference between them?

What happened while they were waiting for the bridegroom?

What happened to the foolish maidens? To the wise?

What did Jesus want to teach by this story?

What story did Jesus tell about two boys?

Which boy loved his father best, the one who said he would not go, and did, or the one who said he would go, and did not?

Where is the kingdom of God?

THE FORTY-NINTH STORY

THE WELCOME OF THE CHILDREN



YOU have heard a great many stories about Jesus, and the wonderful things that happened when He was born and the wonderful things He did when He had grown up. You remember all the little children He cured of dreadful sicknesses, the crazy boy and the son of the widow and the daughter of Jairus and the little stranger girl.

Of course you know that any man who did those things for little children must have loved them very much. And that was the way it was with Jesus. He loved the children and the children loved Him. The mothers used to bring even the littlest babies to Jesus, for Him to touch, so that years and years afterwards their children could say: "I once saw the greatest man of God there ever was, and He touched me."

One day when the mothers were bringing their babies to Jesus, the disciples said: "Why do you trouble the man of God? He has a great many other things to do. He has to preach and He has to cure people, and He has to tell grown-up people about God. He cannot take so much time with these babies."



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JESUS AND THE CHILDREN.

The disciples spoke so roughly to the mothers that they almost cried, and they started to go away. They thought they would never come back to see the man of God, if they were only troubling Him.

But when Jesus saw it, He was angry with His disciples, and He said to them: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God." And by this He meant that He loved little children and that God loved them and that in some ways children were better than grown-up people.

There was another time when Jesus showed how much He thought of little children. All of the disciples were quarreling together. They were quarreling about who was the greatest. And one of them said: "I am the greatest, because I am the oldest." But another said: "I am the greatest, because Jesus chose me first." So they were almost fighting each other.

Then Jesus called a little child and brought him into the midst of the disciples, and He took him in His arms and said: "You must all become like little children and love God the way a little child loves Him. As long as you are proud, and think you are so great, you are not worth anything at all."

While they were all looking at the little child, Jesus said something else. He said: "Whoever is kind to a little child, is kind to me. But whoever hurts a little child and makes him grow up to be bad, it would be better for that man if a heavy stone were hanged around his neck and if he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

All of these things show how much Jesus loved the children. But now you are going to hear a story about how much the children loved Jesus.

After Jesus had done wonderful things for many years, would you not suppose that everyone would love Him? But they did not. There were wicked men who wanted to kill Jesus just because He was so good. They waited for their chance, but they could not find any time when the friends of Jesus were not around.

Most of these wicked men lived in the great city of Jerusalem. They had soldiers who would do whatever they told them. They could do almost anything they wanted to any person who came up to Jerusalem. So these wicked people said: "We will wait till the next feast day, when all the people of the land come up to Jerusalem. Then when Jesus is here, we will take Him and kill Him."

You remember about the feast-day to which Jesus went, when he was a boy. You remember how all the people of the land went up to Jerusalem for the great feast. There was a feast-day like that every year at Easter-time. And when Jesus was about thirty years old He went up to the feast again.

He knew that there were wicked men in Jerusalem who would try to kill Him. But He knew that God wanted Him to go up to Jerusalem to speak to those wicked men. He was very sure that He would be killed, but He was not afraid, for He was doing what God wanted.

So when the time of the feast came, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He had to walk for the whole day,

and when evening came He stopped in a little town just outside of Jerusalem. He stayed there all night.

The next morning Jesus said to two of His disciples: "Go now to the little village just ahead, and as soon as you go in you will find a colt tied. It is a young colt that no one has ever ridden. Untie him and bring him to me. And if anyone says: 'Why are you taking that colt?' you must answer: 'The Lord hath need of him.' And then he will let you go."

The two disciples went to the little village, and there they found a colt that no man had ever sat upon. Then they started to untie it. But the owners of the colt came up and said: "Why are you taking that colt, and what do you want with it?"

The disciples answered: "The Lord hath need of him." So the owners knew that Jesus wanted to use their colt and they sent him along gladly with the disciples. And they brought the colt to Jesus.

Jesus sat on the colt and rode up to Jerusalem. But first the disciples put their coats and cloaks on the colt, so that Jesus would have something soft to sit on. And as He went along the road, they spread their coats and long capes on the ground in front of Him, for the colt to walk on. That was to show how great they thought Jesus was. They did not want even the colt He was on to touch common ground. They were treating Jesus just as they would treat a great king coming to the city.

After a while they came to the top of a high hill very close to Jerusalem. Jesus looked down and saw the beautiful city, with its high stone walls and great gates. He saw the wonderful house of God, all made

of marble and gold. He remembered the first time He had ever seen that temple, when He was only a boy twelve years old.

He remembered how He had stayed for three days in the house of God, asking questions and talking to the wise teachers, and how He had prayed God to make Him a great man of God to help the people. God had made Him the greatest man of God there

ever was, or ever could be, and now the very people He wanted to help were trying to kill Him.



THE WELCOME OF THE CHILDREN

Just when Jesus was thinking all these things, He saw a great crowd of people coming up the mountain toward Him. There were some grown people, but there were ever and ever so many children.

They knew all about the great man of God who loved the little children, and they knew He was coming up to Jerusalem for the feast, so they went out to meet Him.

As soon as the children saw Jesus coming, they began to shout. They waved big branches in the air. The children who did not have any branches ran to the trees and broke some off, and then they ran back to wave them. They put down beautiful green

branches for the colt to walk on, because there were not enough coats to go all the way to Jerusalem.

All the way down the mountain they made a great procession, singing and shouting and waving long green branches. And that was to show how glad they were that Jesus had come to Jerusalem. For they did not know about the wicked men who wanted to kill Jesus.

This is what they shouted: "Hosannah, Hosannah. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David. Hosannah in the highest." For that was the very same thing they would have shouted if there had been a great king coming to the city.

The wicked men saw how happy all the people were to see Jesus. It made them very angry. They said to one another: "Behold, we can do nothing. The whole world is gone after Him."

They came to Jesus and said: "O man of God, tell these children to keep still. For this is the feast day in our city, and they will disturb the people. They must not shout in the streets."

Then all the children waited to see what Jesus would say. He knew they were shouting because they loved Him, and because they wanted Him to be a great king. They wondered if He would tell them to stop.

But Jesus turned to the wicked men and said: "Let them alone. If you make them be silent, the very stones of the street will shout." And everyone wondered what He meant.

After this Jesus went into the house of God. He went through a great high gate all made of marble.

And there in the very house of God itself, He found men selling sheep and oxen and doves. They were changing money and quarreling about it and making a great noise.

Jesus looked around and saw the people who had come a long way to the house of God. They were trying to pray, but the men who were selling sheep were making so much noise that no one could think about God. Even when Jesus tried to pray, the quarreling men were all around Him, shaking their money and talking.

All this made Jesus very angry. "It is these wicked men who are really disturbing the people," he said. "They keep everyone from prayer. They are changing money and stealing and quarreling right in the house of God."

So Jesus took the sheep, and the oxen, and the tables covered with money, and the men who were cheating and quarreling, and He threw them out of the house of God. And He said: "God's house is a house of prayer for all the world; but you have made it a den of robbers."

When the children saw this they began to sing again: "Hosannah, Hosannah. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And the wicked men said to Jesus: "Do you hear what these children are saying?" But Jesus answered: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise." And that meant that only the children really understood how to praise Jesus.

And that was how it happened that the children showed how much they loved Jesus. But the wicked

men went away very angry because of what Jesus had done. They began to think of the best way to kill Him. They did not love Jesus at all. But Jesus was happy that day because He knew that the children loved Him.

QUESTIONS

Did Jesus love children?

What did Jesus do when the mothers brought their babies to Him?

What did Jesus say about people who make little children grow up bad?

Did everyone love Jesus because He was so good?

Did the children love Jesus?

When Jesus went up to the feast, on what did He ride? How did He get the colt?

What did the disciples do?

What did the children do when they saw Jesus coming?

Did everyone like to hear the children shouting?

Why would not Jesus stop their shouting?

What did Jesus find in the house of God?

What did He do?

Does it make Jesus happy to have children love Him?



THE FIFTIETH STORY

PAUL

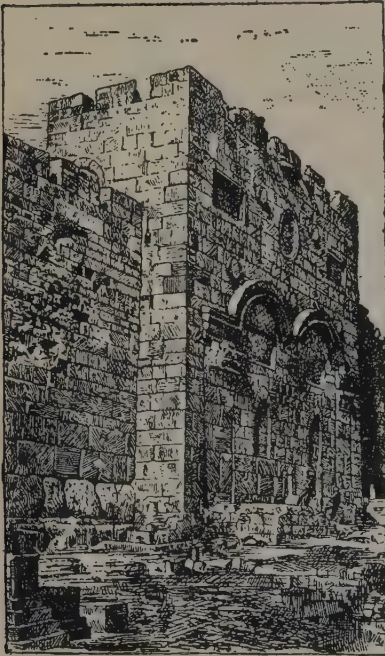


YEARS and years ago, in the days when Jesus was still on earth, there lived in the city of Tarsus a rich Jew. He had many ships that sailed all over the world and brought him gold and precious things from every land. He had many slaves to work for him and to row his ships. For in those days ships did not go with steam, as they do in these days. They were rowed by slaves who sat in long lines and worked very hard.

The city of Tarsus was not a Jewish city. There were a great many heathen people in it; people who did not know anything about the true God. They prayed to the sun, and the moon, and to many other gods. They did not like the Jews, because the Jews prayed to only one God.

But this rich Jew left his own land and his own town and went to live in Tarsus. For he said: "My own town is very small, and my own land is a desert country, and I cannot get rich there. But the city of Tarsus is on the shore of the sea, and there are great ships that go in and out of it. If I live there I may be rich some day." And that was why he went to live in Tarsus.

There were a great many other Jews who went to live in Tarsus because they thought they could get rich more easily. Some of them did grow rich and some of them always stayed poor. But whether they were rich or poor, they always remembered that they



THE GOLDEN GATE
JERUSALEM

all belonged together, for they came from the same land. So they lived together in the same part of town, and had the same house of God where they went to pray and to hear about God.

And whether they were rich or poor, they never forgot that there was really only one God and that He wanted them to be good and to obey Him.

They never went to the places where the heathen gods were, and they never liked the

heathen people. But every year, when the great feast was held in Jerusalem, a great many of the Jews in Tarsus went all the way up to Jerusalem to the wonderful house of God there. It was a long journey, but they went, because they loved their own land and their own people, even if they had gone to Tarsus to live.

One day a little boy was born to the rich Jew who had so many ships. But when it came time to give him a name, they did not know what to do. For all of the Jews talked one language, and all of the other people in Tarsus talked another. And they did not know in which language they would name their baby boy.

At last the father said: "We will give him two names, one in one language and one in the other. Then all the Jews will call him one name, but all the other people will call him the other." So they named him Saul, after the great Jewish king who had lived ever so many hundreds of years before. And they named him Paul for his other name, when the people who were not Jews were talking to him.

Little Paul grew up in the city of Tarsus. He did a great many interesting things. He liked to go down to the sea and watch his father's ships come in. He thought of the wonderful lands so far away from which they had come.

"When I am grown, I will journey all over the world," he said. "I will see people of all lands and I will go over all the sea."

One day one of the boys that Paul knew came to him. "There are going to be races in this very city before long," he said. "Have you seen the great processions and all the colored ribbons the people are wearing?"

Paul said: "I will go to see the races." So when the time came he slipped out of his house and met the other boy, and they went to the races. They saw thousands and thousands of people sitting on stone seats in a great circle to watch the race.

When the race began the people cheered for the racers they liked best, until one of them won. Then they all cheered for the racer that had won. And Paul thought: "Would it not be fine to win a race some day, with all the people looking on to cheer."



PAUL IN JERUSALEM.

For many years Paul lived in Jerusalem. He went to the wonderful house of God with the gold and marble walls. He listened to all the wisest men in Jerusalem. And he learned a great many things.

He learned all about Moses and the Children of Israel down in Egypt, and

how Moses brought them away from the wicked king. Do you remember that story? And he learned all the things that Moses taught the people. He learned the ten commandments of Moses, which perhaps you will learn some day.

He learned about King Saul, the man he was named after. And he learned about King David, and the other kings. He learned all the stories that there are in this book, except the ones about Jesus.

Why do you suppose he did not learn the stories about Jesus? Because Jesus was living at this very same time Paul was living. Jesus was living in the

little town of Nazareth, and nobody knew about Him, or about the wonderful things that He was going to do.

And after a while, when Jesus was in Jerusalem doing wonderful things, Paul had gone home for a vacation. So Paul never met Jesus in all the years that he was in Jerusalem. Paul never knew that some day he was going to be a great man of God and go all over the world to tell people about Jesus.

That was what Paul did. He was the greatest man of God that there ever was, except Jesus himself. He went all over the earth, and to the city of Rome where the emperor lived. A great many wicked men tried to kill him, and he was ship-wrecked on an island, and had many exciting things happen to him. But nobody could kill him till he had done all the things that God wanted him to do.

QUESTIONS

Who was Paul's father?

Why did so many Jews live in Tarsus?

What did Paul do when he was a boy?

What kind of games did Paul go to see?

What kind of wise men lived in Tarsus?

Why did Paul go to live in Jerusalem?

Why did Paul never see Jesus while Jesus was in Jerusalem?

What did Paul do all the rest of his life?

THE FIFTY-FIRST STORY

PAUL AND THE SLAVE GIRL



PERHAPS you would like to hear the story of a man who did a good deed, and was whipped for it.

This is a story about a girl who was cured by Paul. You remember Paul, the little boy who grew up to be a great preacher. He went all over the world and told people about Jesus and about God. He was a very wise man, and many wonderful things happened to him.

Paul went north and west and west, telling everyone he met about Jesus. At last he came to the edge of the great sea. He could not go any farther north unless he crossed the sea, and he did not know whether God wanted him to cross it or not. Over on the other side of the water was the land of Macedonia, with great and beautiful cities in it. But the people were all heathen people, who did not know about Jesus.

So Paul wondered whether he should go over to Macedonia or not. And that night he dreamed a dream. He saw a man standing on the shore of the sea. The man was dressed in the kind of clothes that the people of Macedonia wore. He was stretching

out his arms to Paul and saying: "Come over to Macedonia and help us." So Paul decided that God wanted him to go to Macedonia.

The very next day Paul set sail from the land, and crossed the sea. He took with him his friend Silas. They sailed and sailed till they came to a large and beautiful city, and there they stopped.

"We will stay here for a while," said Paul, "and here will we preach to the people."

They stayed in the city for many days, and every day Paul went down by the river-side and preached to the people. A great many people listened to Paul.

One day when Paul was going out to preach, he met a maiden. She was a poor little slave girl and she told fortunes. When she was a very little girl, her master found out that there was something the matter with her. Sometimes evil spirits seized her, and she would fall down and say things.

You well remember how Jesus cured the poor boy, who, when an evil spirit seized him, would fall on the ground and roll and cry out loudly. The same thing was the matter with this girl. When the evil spirit caught her, her eyes went round and round so that people were frightened, and she said all kinds of strange things.

But this poor girl did not have any kind father to take her to be cured of her distress. She was only a slave girl. The man who owned her did not care what happened to her. He only wanted to have her work and to make money out of her.

So he said to himself: "What good is such a girl to me? I will have her killed, for she cannot work."

But just when he was thinking that he would have her killed, another man came to see him. The other man said: "I will tell you a way to make a great deal of money out of your little slave girl. But I will not tell you unless you give me half. We will own her together."



PAUL HEALING THE SLAVE GIRL

Then the master of the girl said: "Tell me. For she is of no use to me now."

The other man said: "This is what we will do. The next time she cries out we will take her into the

street and show her to the people. They will see her rolling around on the ground in that way, and they will say: 'What does this mean?' Then we will tell them that she is a very wonderful fortune-teller, and that what they see is a spirit talking to her and telling her strange things."

"And what good will that do?" asked the master of the girl.

"Then all the people will want to have her tell their fortunes, and they will pay us a great deal of money. We can easily make up fortunes for the strange sounds she makes."

Was not that a cruel thing to do to a poor little girl who was so hurt by the evil spirits? But that was what they did. They took her around on the street, and showed her off to people, and made her tell fortunes. And that was how it was that Paul saw her.

As soon as the maiden saw Paul and Silas, she began to cry out: "These men are good men. They are servants of God, and they have come to tell you the ways of God." She did this every day for a long time.

After a while Paul found out about her, and about how her wicked masters made money out of her. So the next time he went down the street he said: "If that maiden comes again, I will cure her of her affliction and of the spirits that bother her."

The very next day Paul was walking down the street to the place where he was going to preach, and he saw the girl. She cried out again: "These men are good men. They are servants of God and they have come to tell you the ways of God."

Then Paul turned and said to the spirits that were bothering her: "I charge you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her." Then the spirits came out and she was not so troubled any more.

But the wicked men that the slave girl belonged to were not pleased at this. For they said: "She made much more money by telling fortunes than she can make by working. Paul has taken away our money from us."

So they took hold of Paul and Silas and dragged them to the judge. They said: "These men are Jews who are bothering us. They teach us many things that it is not right for us to do. They preach against our king and against our laws." That, of course you know, was not true at all.

The judge took Paul and Silas and gave them to his soldiers and said: "Whip them with heavy whips and throw them into prison." So the soldiers whipped Paul and Silas with heavy whips and threw them into prison. They put them in a black dungeon and fastened their feet so that they could not move.

Then the judge said to the man who kept the prison: "If you do not keep these men safely, you shall be killed." So the man who kept the prison locked all the doors with heavy iron bolts, to keep Paul and Silas very safe.

As soon as Paul and Silas were put in prison, they began to sing. They sang beautiful songs about God and about Jesus, and all the prisoners listened to them. Then the man who kept the prison said: "What strange men are these to sing in prison?"

And all of a sudden in the middle of the night there was a dreadful earthquake. The earth shook, and the city shook, and the walls of the prison shook. And the fastenings on Paul's feet shook right off, and all the doors shook open.

Then the man who kept the prison awoke, and saw that all the doors were open. He said: "The men are gone, and I will kill myself, before the judges kill me." But Paul called to him from the prison: "We are all here."

So the man ran into the prison and took Paul and Silas into his own house. He gave them everything they needed and kept them till the morning. And in the morning the judges came to the prison, and said: "Let these men go. For they are good men and God is with them."

Paul and Silas went out of prison and they kept on preaching and curing people. For they were not afraid.

QUESTIONS

Why did Paul go to the city where the slave girl lived?

How did he meet the slave girl?

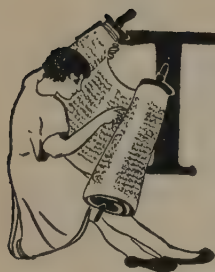
What did the girl have to do for her masters?

Why were the masters angry with Paul for curing her?

What happened to Paul in the prison?

THE FIFTY-SECOND STORY

PAUL'S YOUNG FRIENDS



O a great man of God like Paul, who travelled all around the world, how great must have been the blessing of his many friends? Some of those friends were not very old. This story is about Paul's young friends.

One of them was Paul's own nephew. Paul's sister had married a man who lived in the great city of Jerusalem. They had a boy born to them. And when this boy grew up, he heard a great deal about his uncle, Paul. He knew that there were many men in Jerusalem who hated Paul, because he preached about Jesus. These wicked men wanted a chance to kill Paul.

You remember the story of the boy who fell out of the window? Do you remember where Paul was going when he stopped at the city by the sea? He was going to Jerusalem. He knew that there were wicked people there who would try to kill him, but he knew that God wanted him to go there anyway.

Paul was a very brave man. He always did what God wanted him to do, even if he thought he would be killed. So he went up to Jerusalem. And when he came there, he stood up and preached about Jesus.

There was one thing Paul always preached that the Jews did not like. He said: "God loves everybody; he loves other people just as much as he loves the Jews." The Jews did not want to think that God did not love them better than anyone else; that was why they tried to kill Paul.

So this time, they listened to everything Paul had to say till he said that one thing. But as soon as he said: "God sent me to tell the people who are not Jews that God loves them,"—then the Jews rose up and took stones to throw at Paul. There was such a noise that the chief ruler had to send his soldiers to quiet the people.

The chief ruler took Paul into the ruler's house and put him in prison to keep him till the next day. For he said: "Tomorrow, when the people are quiet, I will bring Paul before me, and he shall say what he has been doing. And if anyone can show me any wrong thing that he has done, then I will punish him."

So the ruler sent word all through the city and said: "Tomorrow I will bring Paul before the judge. And anyone who wishes him punished, must tell what wrong he has done."

Now the Jews did not like this. They knew that Paul had not done anything for which the judge would punish him. So they said: "What can we do to Paul, and how can we kill him?"

Then forty men came together and said: "We swear a great oath that we will not eat nor drink till we have killed Paul. Tomorrow, when the ruler brings him out, we will all set upon him and kill him. But we must not let anyone know about this."

That very evening, Paul's sister's son heard about it, and came into the prison where Paul was. And he said: "There are forty men who have sworn a great oath that they will not eat nor drink till they have killed you. They will be waiting for you tomorrow when the ruler brings you out."

Paul called the man who kept the jail and said: "Take this young man to the ruler, for he has something to say to him. So they brought Paul's sister's son to the ruler. And the ruler said to him: "What word have you for me, and why have you come to me in the evening? It must be a very important thing."

Paul's nephew said: "O ruler, it is a thing of life or death. For there are forty men who have sworn a great oath that they will not eat nor drink till they have killed Paul. They will wait for him tomorrow when you bring him down."

Then the ruler said: "How do you know this?" And Paul's nephew told him how he knew. And the ruler said: "I will send Paul away from the city this very night. And I will send two hundred soldiers, and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen, to go as far as the sea, and when the forty men come down tomorrow morning, they will not find Paul."

So that was what he did. And Paul went away by night as far as the sea, with two hundred soldiers and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. And that was the way that Paul's life was saved.

* * *

Paul had many other young friends. Another one of his friends was a slave boy. His name was Onesimus. He was not a good slave boy. He did not do

his work well, and he often stole things from his master.

The master of Onesimus was a friend of Paul. He was a very good man. He tried to treat Onesimus kindly and to teach him to be a good boy and do his work well. But Onesimus would not learn. He stole the things that his master owned, and he did not do his work.

At last the master said: "I shall have to punish Onesimus." He called the chief of all his servants and said to him: "Onesimus is a bad slave. He steals from me, and he will not work. Take him out and have him whipped."

So the chief of all the slaves took Onesimus out and had him whipped. But that did not make Onesimus any better. It only made him very angry. He said to himself: "I will run away from my master and take a ship to Rome. For Rome is a big city and I shall hide there."

Onesimus thought and thought of the way to get to Rome. For he had no money to pay his way. At last he said: "I know what I will do. I will steal money from my master, and I will go to Rome with it. Then I will not be a slave any more."

Now in those times, years and years ago, most of the masters kept chains on their slaves except when they were working, so that they could not run away. But Onesimus' master was a good man. He was a friend of Paul, and he loved God. So he was kind to his slaves and did not keep chains on them. And that was why Onesimus had a chance to run away.

What do you think of a slave boy who would run

away from a master because his master was kind enough to give him a chance and to trust him? But that was what Onesimus did. And he stole a great deal of his master's money and went off on a ship to Rome. For a long time he hid in Rome, for he was afraid that his master would hunt him. But the master did not even look for Onesimus; he just let him go.

So Onesimus lived in Rome. He spent all the money he had stolen, and he did not work hard enough to earn more money, so he became very poor. He found that Rome was no better to live in than the place where he had been with his master. And he had no one to take care of him.

After a long while, whom do you suppose Onesimus met in Rome? You remember, do you not, that Onesimus was one of Paul's young friends. Well, Rome was the place where he met Paul. When he first saw Paul, Onesimus thought: "I wonder if he will remember that I was a slave in the house of one of his friends. Perhaps he will send me back."

But Paul did not say anything about sending Onesimus back. And after a while, Onesimus began to talk to Paul and to tell him about all the things that had happened to him. And Paul told Onesimus about Jesus, and about how God loved Onesimus and wanted him to be good. Paul said to Onesimus: "You stole money from your master and ran away. Did it make you happy?"

Onesimus answered: "No, I have been very unhappy here in Rome." And Paul said: "Doing evil never makes anyone happy."

Onesimus and Paul talked together a great deal, till after a while Onesimus began to love God and to want to be good. And one day he said to Paul: "I have made up my mind to be good, and to do what



PAUL AND ONESIMUS.

Jesus wants me to do. For doing evil has never made me happy."

Then Paul said to Onesimus: "If you are going to do what is right, you must go back to your master."

It seemed very hard to Onesimus to go back to his

master, when he had stolen his money and run away. But that is the trouble when you do wrong. Sometimes you have to take it back, and it is hard then. But at last Onesimus said: "I will go back."

Paul said: "I will write a letter to your master and tell him that you are my friend, and that you are going to be a good slave now. I will tell him not to punish you, but to treat you kindly." This made Onesimus very happy, for he knew that when a great man like Paul asked anything, his master would do it.

So Paul wrote a letter to the master of Onesimus, and there is a copy of that letter in the Bible to this very day. And Paul told Onesimus' master all about his long talks with Onesimus, and how much he loved Onesimus, and how he would like to have him stay always in Rome to help him with his work.

Onesimus took the letter to his master. And his master forgave him everything he had done. And because he had come back of his own will, his master made him free and sent him to Paul in Rome, to help him there with his work. So Onesimus went back to Paul and became one of his best friends.

* * *

There was one friend of Paul's, a young friend, who was the very best friend of all. His name was Timothy, and two of the letters that Paul wrote to him, hundreds and hundreds of years ago, are still kept in the Bible. Is not that a long time to keep letters?

Timothy's mother was a Jewess. She was a very good woman. She knew all about the old men of God and what they had taught about God. And when

Timothy was born, she said to herself: "As soon as my boy is old enough to learn, I will teach him all about the men of God, and some day he will be a man of God himself, and will help people."

So when Timothy grew up, she told him all the stories about the men of God who had lived years before. She told him about Moses and about Daniel, and about Saul and about Abraham. She told him all the stories in this book except the stories about Jesus and Paul, and those were not written yet.

One day Timothy's mother came home and said: "I have heard of a great man of God who has come to our city. He is telling all the people about God. But he is telling them about a person named Jesus, who he says is the Son of God. My son must hear Him."

Now of course you know who this great man was that Timothy's mother heard of. It was Paul. Timothy's mother went with Timothy to hear Paul. She heard all Paul said about God and about Jesus, and she believed him. And she said: "I wish that my son could be a man of God some day, and help Paul to tell people about Jesus."

Timothy stayed with his mother and learned the things that he had to know. And Paul went away to preach in some other cities. But after a while Paul came back to the city where Timothy lived. And when Paul saw Timothy, and heard how much he had learned, and how he wanted to be a man of God, Paul loved Timothy. And said he to him: "Come with me, and help me to tell about Jesus."

Then Timothy was very happy because so great a man had asked him to help him. He went home to

his mother and said: "Mother, the great man Paul has asked me to go with him."

His mother said: "You are old enough now. You may go." So Timothy went with Paul. And he had a great many exciting times. Many times he was put in prison and sometimes he was nearly killed. But he became a great man of God. And he was Paul's friend to the day of Paul's death.

QUESTIONS

Who were three of Paul's young friends?

What did Paul's sister's son do to save Paul's life?

Why did people want to kill Paul?

What did the ruler of the city do?

What did Paul preach that the Jews did not like?

Do you think that God loves everyone?

Who was Onesimus?

What did he do that was wrong?

Where did he meet Paul?

What did Paul tell him to do?

What happens to everyone who does wrong?

Who was Timothy?

What did his mother want him to be when he grew up?

How did he meet Paul?

What did Paul ask him to do?

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